COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Volume VII FALL 1955 Number 4

Friedrich Schlegel's Literary Criticism. By Victor Lange 289

The Metaphor of Hieroglyphics in German Romanticism. By Liselotte Dieckmann 306

Dostoevsky's Aesthetics and Schelling's Philosophy of Art. By Heinrich Stammler 313

Narrative Logic and Imitation in *The Faerie Queene*. By W. J. B. Owen 324

Matilda Heron's *Camille*. By Merle L. Perkins 338

Mr. Wimsatt on the Theory of Literature. Ey Eliseo Vivas 344

Book Reviews 362

Etude des Bacchanales ou le folastrissime voyage d'Hercueil. Fait l'an 1549, par Ronsard, by André Desguine (Janet M. Roach). *Nietzsche in the Early Work of Thomas Mann*, by R. A. Nicholls (Wolfgang Leppmann). *Die Metamorphosen der Liebe und Friedrich Spees Trutznachtigall*, by Eric Jacobsen (Bayard Quincy Morgan). *Hungry Generations: The Nineteenth-Century Case Against Malthusianism*, by Harold R. Boner (Lloyd R. Sorenson). *The Tragedies of George Chapman*, by Ennis Rees (Charlotte Kesler). *The Romantic Realist: Caroline de la Motte Fouqué*, by Jean T. Wilde (Bayard Quincy Morgan). *Walt Whitman en Hispanoamérica*, by Fernando Alegría (Bernardo Gicovate).

Books Received 377

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COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

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FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL'S LITERARY CRITICISM

VICTOR LANGE

FEW European writers have been so ceaselessly and so brilliantly concerned with the large philosophical assumptions as well as the specific means and purposes of literary criticism as was Friedrich Schlegel, and among them there is none whose achievement is more elusive and more difficult to assess. Schlegel's work reflects an extraordinarily rich and complicated if not always attractive mind; it is abundant and varied, but its total impression is diffuse and disjointed and lacking in continuity of intellectual development. Its impulses are often more astounding than its conclusions, and in its peremptory and oracular manner it tends to be challenging rather than lucid. "Most of your writings," commented his friend Novalis, "lead me into Cimmerian darkness";[1] and when Byron turned to some of Schlegel's later and uncommonly sober lectures, they seemed always to carry him to the verge of meaning, but "lo! he goes down like sunset, or melts like a rainbow, leaving a rather rich confusion."[2]

The chance of obtaining a reliable view of Schlegel's performance is, for us, made doubly difficult by the fact that many of his major writings are today not easily obtained; with the exception of his aphorisms and a few essays, they have seldom if ever been reissued, and much material, probably of decisive importance for a total appraisal, has remained unpublished.[2a] Little wonder, then, that there exists as yet no study, either biographical or critical, that would adequately portray

[1] *Romantikerbriefe*, ed. F. Gundelfinger (Jena, 1907), p. 254.

[2] *The Works of Lord Byron* (London, 1832-33), V (*Letters and Journals*), 191.

[2a] When the considerable body of hitherto unpublished Schlegel material now in Vienna, Trier, Cologne, and elsewhere becomes generally available, it will undoubtedly modify our estimate of his intellectual development, and certainly increase the canon of his critical writings. Among these manuscripts are early and late essays of a fragmentary character, notebooks, and the full text of a series of lectures delivered in Paris in 1804 on the history of European literature.

this awkward and eccentric figure, and that would assign to him a just place in the history of modern literary criticism.

If one were to begin a discussion of Schlegel's work by determining his position at the onset of his career within the tradition of European thinking, one would be struck by the remarkable balance with which he maintains himself between two main sources of modern intellectual history—the reappraisal of the classical heritage as it was represented in Germany by Winckelmann, and the new manner of perceiving the relationship of the critic and historian to his object which was most amply argued in the earlier works of Herder. Winckelmann and Herder, more than any other two native thinkers, determined the evolution of German classicism, the kind of cultural philosophy that Goethe, Schiller, and Humboldt represent and that is best described as a modern form of humanism—to distinguish it from the orthodox form of classicism that we know in France and early eighteenth-century England. This German form of classicism, Henri Peyre has quite properly insisted, is in fact not a belated local excrescence of the classicism of Racine or Dryden, but a preliminary phase of the emerging romantic sensibility. In this process of shifting the ideas of the classical world into the focus of the new organic philosophies that the late eighteenth century had formulated, Friedrich Schlegel is one of the most sensitive agents.

He began, slowly and tentatively, with a series of writings on the ancient world and its specific excellences. "Vom Wert des Studiums der Griechen und Römer" (1794) and "Über das Studium der griechischen Poesie" (written 1794, published three years later) are his first two pieces of independent analysis; they deal not merely with individual ancient poets or with types of writing, but with the special intellectual situation that produced them. These essays are, in a strictly academic sense, as speculative and as dubious as that dithyrambic account of classical attitudes that the young Nietzsche offered less than a century later; but if this seems, in both, a defect of scholarly detachment, it points as well to their common concern with the uses of antiquity for an interpretation of the present.

Schlegel, like Nietzsche, sets off the body of classical literature against the character of his age, in order to contrast, without the maudlin self-pity of Rousseau or the melancholy pathos of Gibbon, the special intellectual assumptions of classical and modern literature. What interested him, as it had only a few years earlier preoccupied Herder, was to obtain a clear insight into the complex human situation of the moderns, against the background of the simple, the natural, proportions of the human being which the Greeks seemed to him to have represented. But Schlegel's first studies in classical poetry differ in emphasis from the cultural speculations of Herder and his contemporaries (even from those of Schiller and Goethe); they are distinguished by their single-minded attention, from the very beginning, to the evidences

of changing sensibility in the mainstream of European literature. This is to say that he was then, as he was throughout his career, first and foremost preoccupied not so much with the large historical judgment as with the literary document itself, with its properties, its forms, and its spiritual context. Literature, poetry, was for him the most clearly articulated and therefore the most telling expression of the human energy; it was the central achievement of a given culture. If, by his first writings, he hoped to become, in Herder's words, the Winckelmann of Greek poetry,[3] he meant to establish, in the realm of poetry, that delicate balance between categorical reverence for the example of the Greeks and an awareness of the particular perspectives from which his or any other modern period might exercise this respect.

The influence of Winckelmann and Herder upon Schlegel was important and even decisive;[4] yet his emerging view of the antithesis between "classical" and "modern" owes as much to his reading of Kant. And it coincides, though perhaps without Schlegel's being fully aware of it at the time, with the typological categories in Schiller's essay, "Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung." In the terms of these familiar philosophical antecedents, Schlegel assumes a disparity between idea and appearance that is resolvable in the creation of beauty. In beauty, chaos may become cosmos, and cosmos is the ultimate creative order adequate to the human potentialities. To represent this free playing and "disinterested" state of order in beauty is the purpose of all classical art. Modern poetry, on the other hand, does not aim, in Schlegel's early view (as in Schiller's), at the creation of an objective beauty with a validity, an aesthetic existence in itself; it represents rather, and makes available for analysis, the tensions of life which are bound to remain irreconcilable. Modern art creates not beauty but what Schlegel in the "Studium" essay, adopting the terminology of Herder and Kant, calls the "interesting"[5]—a reflected image of the fundamental discrepancies of life, of the discrepancies between emotion and intelligence, between nature and speculation, between individual impulse and a transcending order.

The tragedy of the Greeks (the "aesthetic" tragedy) projected a vision of ideal harmony; modern ("philosophical") tragedy offers in its greatest and most characteristic specimens—and Schlegel had, of course, *Hamlet* in mind—a "maximum of spiritual despair." "There is no more perfect representation of the unresolvable disharmony of the human mind—the true subject matter of philosophical tragedy—than the infinite discrepancies between thought and action in Hamlet's

[3] Herder, *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. B. Suphan (Berlin, 1877), I, 293.

[4] W. Kohlschmidt, *Herder Studien* (Berlin, 1929), pp. 96-113.

[5] Friedrich Schlegel, *Seine prosaischen Jugendschriften*, ed. J. Minor (Vienna, 1906), II, 91, 95, 109 f. (henceforth referred to as Minor). See also V. Santoli's discussion of this and related aspects of Schlegel's aesthetics in F. Schlegel, *Frammenti critici e scritti di estetica* (Florence, 1937), pp. vii ff.

character."[6] "Philosophical" tragedy disturbs without resorting to a vision of relief, it unsettles without catharsis; indeed, its main object is to produce in the audience a philosophical state of doubt and unrest. The modern poet—this is Schlegel's central if not altogether original thesis—recognizes the inevitable alienation of the mind vis-à-vis nature and does not, and cannot, in his work transcend a situation which in its essence is tragic; his main effort must, therefore, be directed not at aesthetic reconciliation, but at making the inescapable conflicts between nature and mind articulate and transparent.

Schlegel's attitude in outlining these differing intellectual resources is, even in his early writings, not unequivocally partial to the classical temper; he is remarkably objective in his analysis of the modern situation and one would not suspect from the extraordinarily lively and impressive account of Shakespeare's demonic heroism that this magnificent capacity of the moderns for the rendering of, as he says, "the colossal dissonance between man and his fate"[7] appears to him but a passing crisis of taste—which is overcome by a sort of dialectic synthesis in the neoclassical productions of Goethe, who had, particularly in *Werther*, proved his modern sensibility but who had also experienced the corrective discipline of a profound insight into the nature of Greek feeling. Early in 1794, Schlegel wrote to his brother, "The problem of our poetry seems to me the fusing of the essentially modern with the essentially classical; Goethe is the first in an entirely new phase of the history of art to have begun approaching this goal..."[8] It is not the least important aspect of Schlegel's "Studium" essay that it provides the first congenial and positive interpretation in German criticism of the turn in Goethe's career from the mood of the Storm and Stress to that of *Iphigenie* and *Tasso*.

As yet, Schlegel had no term by which to describe this new, supramodern attitude; where he uses the term "romantic" in these first essays, he refers to the gothic, if subtle, fantasies of "that great barbarian intermezzo"[9] of which the monumental work of Dante is the most sublime specimen.[10] It was only after reading *Wilhelm Meister* that he defined Goethe's neoclassical synthesis as "romantic." What interests us here is Schlegel's conviction that it is the eminently critical disposition of the modern poet that should enable him, as it had Goethe, to transcend the limitation of his tragic involvement in life. The modern poet, Schlegel had argued in the "Studium" essay, finds himself increasingly divorced from his surrounding society; he becomes an "isolated egotist" who, because of his ever more acute perception of

[6] Minor, I, 107.
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] Friedrich Schlegel, *Briefe an seinen Bruder August Wilhelm*, ed. O. F. Walzel (Berlin, 1890), p. 170.
[9] Minor, I, 99.
[10] *Ibid.*, I, 98.

the paradoxy of existing forms of faith, must turn either to a sentimental kind of formalism or to the appealing devices of parody. His medium is prose.[11] As he becomes more and more conscious of the force upon his own writing of the accumulated body of past literary theory, he will tend to produce didactic, essayistic or, as Schlegel calls it, "philosophical" writing. In his efforts at rendering faithfully the characteristic or "interesting" phenomena of life, he will feel compelled to engage, poetically speaking, in "chemical experiments, in the arbitrary separation and reassembling of the primary art forms."[12] By his modern perspicacity he will inevitably break up the seeming unity of nature and dissolve its organization into elementary particles.

In the "Studium" essay the analytical state of mind appears as a destructive if inescapable condition of the modern poet; but after 1794, as Schlegel shifts his philosophical allegiance from Kant to Fichte, the ability of the modern mind to accept this capacity of the reflective intelligence with radical self-consciousness evolves into perhaps his most positive advantage. And if, for the earliest Schlegel, it was the *poet* who neutralizes the tension of the moderns by his recall of the compensating image of the Greeks, so it is in the essays and aphorisms written after 1796 the *critic* who must represent the modern detachment as the projection of his unique sensibility and insight.

Almost as soon as the "Studium" essay was published, Schlegel, in one of his first critical fragments, seemed inclined to disavow it. It is "but a mannered hymn in prose to the objective element in poetry; its worst feature seems to me the total lack of that indispensable quality of irony."[13] "Irony"—this is from now on the term which indicates the specific—romantic—mode of creative procedure. It expresses, as another aphorism puts it, "the clear consciousness of eternal agility, of the infinite abundance of chaos."[14] As early as 1794, in the essay "Vom ästhetischen Werte der griechischen Komödie," he had defended Aristophanes' frequent suspension of the dramatic illusion: "This," he said, "is not clumsiness but deliberate calculation; indeed, it is an expression of the most intense vitality. For life at its most incandescent creates as it destroys, and if it cannot destroy an object outside itself, it must turn upon itself, its own creations."[15] Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1794 reinforced Schlegel's notion of the chance of the creative individual to maintain himself suspended between the antitheses of life, and, thus mirroring rather than mastering them, to transcend the modern sense of disharmony and limitation.[16] In the work of art, that

[11] *Ibid.*, I, 112.
[12] *Ibid.*, I, 102.
[13] *Ibid.*, II, 184.
[14] *Ibid.*, II, 296.
[15] *Ibid.*, I, 18.
[16] Cf. Friedrich Schlegel, *Neue philosophische Schriften*, ed. J. Körner (Frankfurt, 1935), pp. 15, 25.

chance of freedom, that "magic idealism," as Novalis called it, enables the imagination to create its own coherent world of meaning.

We need not pursue the question of the philosophical validity of this concept of irony which many of Schlegel's contemporaries found more striking than productive.[17] Schiller—for various reasons eager to express his distaste for Schlegel—complained to Goethe of the barrenness of Schlegel's critical vocabulary, its "sachlose Wortstrenge";[18] Hegel, in a celebrated passage,[19] felt in its radical subjectivism something like "satanic impertinence." Schlegel's conception of irony, he argues, is purely formal and lacks philosophical substance; it bypasses the problem of understanding, "die denkende Vernunft," and remains on an elusively speculative, even histrionic level; it seems to dispose, haughtily and with windy notions, "verblasene Vorstellungen," of the puzzling relationship between concreteness and abstraction. Valid though Hegel's criticism may be in terms of his own philosophy, it misses the point of Schlegel's intention in the use of the term "ironic." Schlegel was not concerned with defining substance but with the possibility of creating a mode of perception adequate to its assumed infinity.[20]

What matters for our present consideration of Schlegel's principles of literary criticism is this: that the ironic attitude which qualifies the *poet* to produce a construct of specific aesthetic validity enables the *critic*, not merely to recognize and judge this construct, but to perform a function that comprises and indeed transcends that of the poet. The critic illuminates the original exercise of the poet in a re-creative process and on a level where, as Schlegel says, he has brought himself to an understanding of understanding.[21]

It is perhaps useful, before we examine more precisely Schlegel's definition of the critic, to remind ourselves of some of the preliminaries of the critical process which Schlegel enumerates in various contexts. There are many kinds of criticism, but no adequate theory of poetry has as yet been formulated: "What you may find in existing treatises on aesthetics concerning poetry and its form is just about sufficient to explain the principles of watchmaking. Nowhere will you find the slightest conception of the higher form of art, or an adequate conception of poetry."[22]

The most disarming form of criticism is that which Schlegel describes in the *Lyceum* fragment 57 as characteristic of the mystic-minded

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[17] See O. Walzel, *Romantisches* (Bonn, 1934), pp. 73 ff.

[18] *Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe*, ed. P. Stein (Leipzig, n.d.), II, 362.

[19] G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke* (Berlin, 1832-45), XVI, 465-466.

[20] R. Immerwahr, "The Subjectivity or Objectivity of Friedrich Schlegel's Poetic Irony," *GR*, XXVI (1951), 173-191. See also P. Szondi, "Friedrich Schlegel und die romantische Ironie," *Euphorion*, XLVII (1954), 397-411.

[21] Minor, II, 426.

[22] *Ibid.*, II, 427.

amateurs of art who would deplore any sort of criticism as vivisection, as destructive of all enjoyment; if they were logical, the most telling judgment of even a remarkable work would be "potztausend."[23] Only slightly more useful is what Schlegel calls the micrological sort of criticism, a procedure without profile or consequence,[24] which provides a bare Linnean classification of the parts of an organic whole. Nor must criticism be content with a sentimental account of biographical niceties.

The immediate objective of the critic is the elucidation of a human product, and criticism must therefore in some sense be directed towards the maker of this product. One must know how to distinguish the poet from his work, he states peremptorily in one of his Vienna lectures.[25] Yet there is in Schlegel none of the psychological curiosity about the poetic process that is so prominent in the contemporaneous English critics. He is not to any serious degree interested in a theory of composition, such as Coleridge offers us, and seldom enters into a discussion of the difference between feeling and understanding or of the state of mind in which the poet moves towards fancy and imagination. He is concerned with the artist neither as an abstraction nor as a physiologically distinct species, but as a configuration of a total interplay of cultural forces. The larger essays which he devotes to Jacobi or Lessing, to Boccaccio or Cervantes or Goethe, are therefore, ultimately, attempts at crystallizing a particular type of cultural insight.

What makes his critical procedure of special interest to us is that it is always the literary document as an autonomous "construct" from which he proceeds. It is striking to find this ostensibly speculative critic insisting again and again upon the primary importance of craftsmanship. The first requirement of a work of art is for Schlegel a clear purpose and a distinctness of means that alone creates shape and self-sufficiency. The poet's imagination must not be poured into some sort of chaotic poetic effusion—"eine chaotische Überhauptpoesie"—but must be used to produce a work of definite form and type.[26] Why, he asks, in one of the *Athenaeum* fragments,[27] should it be so absurd to compare an author to a manufacturer? He regrets the absence in modern literary life of academies of poetry,[28] he admires Lessing for his infinite skill of construction in which instinct and design are perfectly blended. "A thoroughly developed poetic action is a self-contained whole, a technical world of its own."[29] These are the observations of a perceptive reader whose sense of detail, of rhythm and cadence, of what he calls the fragrance of the text, should disarm those who are inclined to find

[23] *Ibid.*, II, 191.
[24] *Ibid.*, II, 130 f.
[25] Friedrich Schlegel, *Sämmtliche Werke* (Vienna, 1822-25), II, 79.
[26] Minor, II, 355.
[27] *Ibid.*, II, 268.
[28] *Ibid.*, II, 356.
[29] *Ibid.*, I, 139.

Schlegel insensitive to the concrete realities of a poem. It is well, on the other hand, to recognize that Schlegel accepts, without any uncertainty, the given character of such a thing as a poetic structure. His attention is not therefore, in a generic sense, directed to the question: "What is a poem?" He is preoccupied almost exclusively with the requirements of the critic.

The ideal critic, as Schlegel puts it, is in fact a reader who commands a multiplicity of perspectives, who ruminates, "ein Leser der wiederkäut," who should have more than one stomach.[30] Like the poet, he must have ceased to be involved in what he writes about, and, beyond merely recollecting emotion in tranquillity, he should have transcended the idea he wishes to express: "as long as the artist is in a state of enthusiasm and inventiveness he is, for purposes of communication, in an illiberal state of mind."[31] The critic must share in that ironic attitude which is the productive, the philosophical element of the poet himself; this is the meaning of that often quoted but much misunderstood maxim, "Poetry can only be criticized by poetry."[32] Generations of critics have felt justified in deriving from this deceptively simple fragment the license for impressionistic and sentimental self-indulgence. What Schlegel actually envisages is the critic who is congenial to the poet in the sense that both are equally engaged in dealing with that "dim analogue of creation." What the poet constructs, the critic, favored over the poet in that he is twice removed from nature, must reconstruct; and, as he offers a mirror image of the mirror image, he surpasses the poem itself.

Criticism thus transcends poetry; this is a logical consequence of the earlier statement that the critic must be occupied with the understanding of understanding. Hence also Schlegel's not merely facetious designation of his elaborate essay on Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* as the "Übermeister."[33] This peculiarly rich review has become one of the key documents of German romantic criticism. It rests, as a matter of fact, upon a definition of the term "romantic" that is here for the first time distinct and explicit. "Romantic," as we have seen, Schlegel used in his early essays only loosely as the antithesis of "modern"; after about 1797, and under the influence of Schleiermacher and Wackenroder, it assumed more and more a connotation of irrationality, mysticism, religious fervor, and mediaeval Christianity. In the review of *Wilhelm Meister* (1798) and in a number of simultaneous aphorisms, notably that unfathomable (and therefore recklessly quoted) *Athenaeum* fragment 116, "romantic" is identified with the special quality of Goethe's "Roman," in which life seems to Schlegel thoroughly spiritualized and

[30] *Ibid.*, II, 186.
[31] *Ibid.*, II, 187.
[32] *Ibid.*, II, 200.
[33] *Romantikerbriefe*, p. 228.

this spiritualized life in turn represented with what he regards as the ultimate in poetic irony and mobility.

> Romantic poetry [this is the beginning of the canonical aphorism] is poetry progressively universal. Its purpose is not merely to reunite all separate (or specific) forms of poetry and to bring poetry in touch again with philosophy and rhetoric. It aims as well at mixing and blending poetry and prose, inspiration and criticism, it must identify life and poetry and in turn make life and society poetic; it must infuse a poetic quality into wit, and charge and saturate the forms of art with the substance of culture [Bildungsstoff].[34]

These are the first three crowded sentences of a long passage which ends with the categorical statement that "romantic poetry cannot be exhaustively defined in any one system of theory," and that "only a divining sort of criticism might venture to approach its ideal. Romantic poetry is infinite in scope; it alone springs from a sense of freedom: indeed, it is its first axiom, that the freedom, the free-playing will [die Willkür] of the poet can tolerate no law above itself."

One cannot fail to be struck by the characteristically dynamic vocabulary of this passage; it speaks of uniting and separating, of fusing and mixing, of identifying, charging, and saturating. This is, of course, indicative of the place of Schlegel's criticism, and romantic criticism in general, in the tradition of the Christian and Neoplatonic theory of creation, of its belief in the subordinate importance of the vessel, as compared to the creative, the divine energy that may reside in it.

If we apply the consequences of this insight to the purposes of romantic criticism—and Schlegel's review of *Wilhelm Meister* is a most telling example—we recognize that it is, in the end, not so much the objective reality of the poem that occupies the critic as the critical act that plays upon the poem and illuminates it as a nearly inexhaustible system of refractions and responses. Goethe scholars have sometimes noted with disapproval the almost total disregard in Schlegel's review of what a more positivistic-minded criticism would describe as Goethe's "actual" intentions. But the critic's relationship to a poem is, for Schlegel, not that of an expositor of more or less concealed but nevertheless discoverable and perhaps objective meanings; it is rather that of an intelligent artist in his own right who, by virtue of his receptive sensibility and his close attention to the suggestive poetic detail, is in a position to elucidate, to manipulate, and, on a level of further intellectual differentiation, to reassemble the primary symbols of the poet.

If, then, it is the business of the critic to produce an object of a specific sort of meaning, different from though dependent upon that of the poet, this task is performed most superbly by one who is critic and poet at once. The definition of this supreme form of criticism is contained in the passage in the *Wilhelm Meister* review which is devoted to an appraisal of Goethe's use, in the novel, of a critique of *Hamlet*. The details

[34] Minor, II, 220.

of Goethe's conception of *Hamlet* need not occupy us here. Wilhelm, it will be recalled, analyzes the play with a view to a more effective reorganization of its parts; and, as Schlegel reflects upon the legitimacy of this—characteristically romantic—purpose, he comes to the following important conclusions:

> Goethe's view of *Hamlet* as it is here presented is not so much criticism as poetry. Indeed, what else but a poem could result, when a poet contemplates and represents a poetic production? Yet the reason for calling this passage poetry is not that the poet's view transcends the limits of the poem by advancing all sorts of insights and assertions. Every piece of criticism must do that—because every poetic work of whatever kind holds more than it conveys and aims at more than it realizes. It is, rather, a matter of purpose and procedure.[35]

There is an essential difference, Schlegel continues, between analytical criticism and "poetic criticism." The first simply states, "like an inscription,"[36] what the object is, what its "place" in the world is or should be; it requires no more than a dedicated and undivided human being who will focus his attention for as long as necessary upon the poem. If he wishes to communicate what he has perceived, he may produce a piece of discursive criticism which Schlegel here, and in the title of his own collection of essays, calls a "Charakteristik."[37] But the poetic critic must do more; he must, in a sense, repeat the original performance, re-imagine the original imagery, and then extend and re-form the poem. What distinguishes the poetic critic from the "ordinary" critic is his respect—and this is one of Schlegel's most important notions—for the special character which any part of the work of art derives from its poetic context. The poetic critic will recognize the "members," the units of a work of art, only insofar as they exist in an aesthetic context; he will never dissect the work into its "original" (i.e., prepoetic) elements, elements which, even though they are by themselves perfectly valid and "living" universals, are yet "dead" apart from the total poetic purpose.[38]

From the *Wilhelm Meister* review, Goethe emerges as the supreme example of the "critical poet," and, as Schlegel understood the term, the "poetic critic." He is the prototype of the "modern" poet exactly by virtue of his critical awareness. "The distinguishing feature of modern literature is its precise relationship to criticism and theory and the dominant influence of the latter."[39] This critical sense, argues Schlegel, enabled Goethe to evolve the literary form that is most adequate to the situation with which the modern poet has to deal. This form is the novel, and to a definition of its specific "romantic" possibilities Schlegel devotes an extraordinary amount of critical labor and

[35] *Ibid.*, II, 177; see also II, 230.
[36] *Ibid.*, II, 177.
[37] *Ibid.*
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] Friedrich Schlegel, *Sämmtliche Werke*, X (1825), 194.

enthusiasm. The three most extensive discussions of this form, apart from dozens of scattered aphorisms, occur in the essay on *Wilhelm Meister*, in one section of the "Gespräch über die Poesie" which first appeared in 1800, and in a review of Goethe's *Works* published in 1808.

Before we examine Schlegel's notions of the novel, we may inquire into his view of literary genres in general. They are not for him, of course, normative categories either in the sense of Lessing's modified classicist theory or in the more liberal understanding of Goethe's "natural forms" that evolve in analogy to natural organisms.[40] Schlegel regards them as barely more than projections of historical, psychological, or sociological conditions which have no compelling permanency. When, as in his theory of tragedy or comedy, he recognizes a certain continuity of the genre, he bases this in the main on the technical requirements of dramatic or theatrical practice and not on any sort of continuity of human characterological or metaphysical issues. Yet, literary forms are in one way or another related to the given structure of any particular society or community. All the more reason, then, for Schlegel, to investigate the special qualities of the contemporary idiom. Those forms which he finds appropriate to his own taste and time and which are congenial, above all, to the reflective, ironic temper of the modern mind are the fragment, the dialogue (das Gespräch), the rhapsody, the arabesque, the ironic comedy, and the speculative, satirical, or polemical aphorism. All these are "mixed" forms ("All pure, classical forms," he says in *Lyceum* fragment 60, "are now absurd");[41] their essential purpose is not the conveying of private feelings, but the establishment, through what Schlegel calls infinite or "elliptical" discourse, of a community of opinion and perception. The lyrical soliloquy, so indicative of a later and different sort of nineteenth-century romanticism, is for Schlegel an enviable but certainly a primitive and inferior manner.

Unlike these forms, which have at least a sporadic historical character in common, the form of the novel is radically new and certainly without a continuous history. The novel (der Roman) represents for Schlegel the most significant invention of the modern analytical sensibility. It is related by its philosophical and discursive purpose not to the classical epic but to the didactic poem, whose greatest single specimen is the *Divine Comedy*. Its only genuine antecedent is Cervantes' masterpiece. But, since the subsequent history of fiction, with the possible exception of the ironic writings of Swift, Sterne, and Jean Paul, was in a variety of ways concerned with providing merely realistic entertainment, Schlegel can maintain that the novel is not a consistent art form; it is not, in a strict sense, a genre—there are only

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 190.
[41] Minor, II, 19.

single conspicuous instances of the kind of philosophical—or poetic—fiction that Schlegel had in mind.[42]

The novel is the equivalent of the Socratic dialogue; it aims at "integrating intellectual, moral, and social beliefs on the level of poetry,"[43] and a sufficient theory of the novel would therefore represent the keystone of a modern philosophy of art.[44] There is something extraordinarily appealing for us in Schlegel's reflections upon the ingredients of fiction. They do not represent merely the novelist's sense of character or of incident; the novel is not a psychological portrait but a series of "allegorical arabesques" which are to evoke, primarily, our sense of the discrepancies and disproportions of life, our sense of what Schlegel calls the grotesque or the fantastic.[45] "It is not the dramatic continuity of a narrative plot that provides the unity of the novel," he remarks in "Gespräch über die Poesie"; "what gives it coherence is the central intellectual perspective."[46] This central intellectual perspective must mobilize every individual poetic device. Here, indeed, Schlegel offers us another facet of the romantic intent; fiction must represent the ironic, that is, the "sentimental" attitude in a fantastic form,[47] and the fantastic form is the autonomous reality of the dream so characteristic of the novels of Jean Paul.

It must also strike us as curiously appropriate to our own view of fiction when we find Schlegel insisting upon the synthetic, the "mixed" character of fiction, that is to say, upon its intellectual range and mobility, its marshalling of possibly heterogeneous devices[48] which, held together not by any psychological consistency of character but by the roving and synoptic power of its author's poetic intelligence, create a "compendium, an encyclopedia of the total spiritual life of an individual."[49] At the same time, however oblique the narrative perspective may be, there should be nothing in the romantic narrative that is not in detail concrete, realistic, experienced, even autobiographical. But whatever the measure of "reality" which Schlegel admits and demands in the novel, it can be justified only within the transcending framework of a belief in the universal spirituality of life. "Realism" has, in this sense, for Schlegel a scholastic connotation; it is not an antecedent but a consequence of a poetic act. "No poetry—no reality"—this is the formula offered in one of the *Athenaeum* aphorisms.[50]

The form of the novel, then, with its intricate and varied possibilities

[42] Friedrich Schlegel, *Sämmtliche Werke*, X (1825), 198.
[43] Minor, II, 121.
[44] *Ibid.*, II, 245.
[45] *Ibid.*, II, 368 ff.
[46] *Ibid.*, II, 373.
[47] *Ibid.*, II, 370.
[48] *Ibid.*, II, 373; see also *Sämmtliche Werke*, X (1825), 191.
[49] *Ibid.*, II, 194.
[50] *Ibid.*, II, 264.

of statement seemed to Schlegel the supremely "romantic" mode, and it is perfectly in keeping with its broad definition that such works as *Hamlet* or Lessing's *Nathan* should appear closer to "fiction" than, in a strict sense, to the drama.[51] The novel is equalled and perhaps surpassed in its suitability for the romantic intention only by a sort of allegorical fantasy which Schlegel, in passing, calls the poetic fairy tale or parable, "das poetische Märchen." This form, which his friend Novalis regarded as the epitome of poetry, does not merely interest or mobilize or involve the imagination (I am paraphrasing *Athenaeum* fragment 429),[52] it fascinates and enchants the mind by its quality of the bizarre, its deliberate association of speculation, poetry, and action. In the novel and fairy tale, so immensely attractive to Schlegel, the poetic experience is wholly subordinated to the philosophical, the constructive intention; these forms are, to use a Fichtean term, altogether "posited."

The practice of art, as we have seen, is for Schlegel a form of discourse which represents and, on the critical level, reassesses by "enthusiastic abstraction" the elements of experience and points implicitly to their present disjointedness and disunity. The accumulative force of this discourse, infinite in scope, offers an ever more certain prospect of a possible synthesis of belief. "Das Gespräch bannt als Form alle Einseitigkeit."[53] The representation of this "synthetic" form of belief Schlegel and the romantic group call the new mythology. It is most elaborately set forth in Schelling's *Philosophie der Kunst* of 1802-03. Since this is perhaps the most consequential of all romantic insights, we must touch at least briefly upon its form and place in Schlegel's thinking.

> The modern poets are compelled to produce everything from within [Schlegel writes in "Gespräch über die Poesie"], and many have done it magnificently; but each of them had to do it alone, each work was a fresh beginning from nothing. Our modern poetry lacks the center that their mythology supplied for the ancients; this is, in fact, the main difference between the ancient poets and the modern—that we have no mythology. But let me add that we are not far from having one, or rather, that it is time we should make a serious effort to produce one.[54]

This is, historically speaking, a familiar argument; Schlegel himself must have come across it in Herder's third collection of *Fragmente*

[51] *Ibid.*, II, 194. Schlegel's ideas concerning the capabilities of the novel contributed in Germany to a far-reaching reassessment of fiction as a vehicle more suitable than classicist tragedy of the "modern," "tragic" view of life. See K. W. F. Solger, *Nachgelassene Schriften* (Leipzig, 1826), I, 178. See also A. W. Schlegel, *Über schöne Litteratur und Kunst* in *Deutsche Litteraturdenkmale*, XIX (1884), 241. Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* reflects this new concept. See V. Lange, "Goethe's Craft of Fiction," *Publ. Engl. Goethe Society*, XXII (1952-53), 49 ff.

[52] Minor, II, 284.

[53] *Ibid.*, II, 180.

[54] *Ibid.*, II, 358.

(1767) and his "Iduna" (1796), where almost the entire range of related problems is first indicated. But what distinguishes Schlegel's thinking from Herder's is that, certainly at this time, he rejects any temptation to resort to a mere re-creation of past mythological substance. "Let us study ancient mythology," this was Herder's challenge, "in the spirit of poetic heuristics—in order to become inventors ourselves";[55] to Schlegel, neither the ancient mythology nor the Christian nor, indeed, the Oriental is in substance repeatable; they correspond to an as yet coherent empirical reality which, in the differentiated and speculative modern world, is impossible to achieve. What is needed is a new "synthetic" mythology which reflects the diversity of modern thinking. Unlike its ancient counterpart, it cannot hope to be merely a figurative rendering of states of mind fundamentally in harmony with its sustaining world. "The new mythology must, on the contrary, be newly created from the profoundest resources of the mind."[56]

In his "Rede über die Mythologie" Schlegel refers to three sources from which the new mythology might be drawn: the idealistic philosophy of Fichte, the abstract and imageless thinking of Spinoza, and the emerging interest in the special sort of natural science which his own friends J. W. Ritter and Henrik Steffens had advanced.[57] This new synthetic mythology or, in Schelling's celebrated phrase, "this great mythological poem" is in the making.

However orphic Schlegel's language may seem as he elaborates this vision, it is clear that he sees in the issue of the new mythology the condition of all modern poetry. With its emphasis upon the metaphorical nature of all incidents of reality[58] and upon the constructive role of the philosopher-poet, it gives to poetry an extreme degree of intellectual and spiritual transparency. "Mythology," he insists, "is the core and center of all poetry."[59] The appropriate manner of modern poetry is not the pragmatic, the confined, the explicit or what he calls the "exoteric" manner (exoteric is, significantly enough, the mode of the drama, for which Schlegel had little interest and which, compared to other modes, he recognized as merely "psychological" and private and therefore exhausted and inadequate); the appropriate manner is "esoteric," the manner of philosophical poetry which, like *Wilhelm Meister* or Novalis' *Ofterdingen*, offers a contrived and aesthetically specific world of meaning, held together by figures and incidents constructed according to a supranatural logic.[60] Poetic forms such as the novel, the parable, the fairy tale, or the didactic poem all contribute

[55] Herder, *Sämmtliche Werke*, I, 444; see also pp. 429, 436, 438.
[56] Minor, II, 358.
[57] *Ibid.*, II, 359 f. See also "Literatur" in *August Wilhelm und Friedrich Schlegel in Auswahl*, ed. O. Walzel, *Deutsche Nationalliteratur*, CXLIII, 297 ff.
[58] Minor, II, 364.
[59] *Ibid.*, II, 298.
[60] "Literatur," p. 307 f.

to this new tactical purpose of myth making. Indeed, myth, fairy tale, and that "universe" which is established in the work of fiction are all analogous: "every novel should be constructed in the manner of a fairy tale—every true mythology is so by definition."[61] Especially in the light of subsequent literary history, we must not underrate the importance of Schlegel's preoccupation with this whole matter of the synthetic creation of a new mythology.

In his later writings—for instance, in the essay "Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Inder" (1808) that was to be of great consequence for the subsequent study of comparative mythology by men such as Creuzer, Görres, or Bachofen—Schlegel greatly elaborates his views of the nature and importance of myth.

At the time of the "Rede über die Mythologie" he was prepared to maintain that the corollary of his arguments was an inevitable and ever more exclusive concern with issues of poetic form and method rather than with an objective content. Yet it was, in the end, not he but the poets and critics of the later nineteenth century who fully accepted the consequences of this "formalist" conclusion. Only a decade later, Schlegel himself disavowed this earlier emphasis upon the primacy of formal resources in the poet, together with his faith in a new secular mythology. "We have been predominantly interested in theories of poetic form," he writes in 1812. "There exists as yet no theory of the adequate content—although as far as the effect of poetry upon life is concerned, this would be infinitely more important."[62] This sounds very different indeed from the language of the "Gespräch über die Poesie"; but by 1812, we must not forget, Schlegel had in nearly all respects changed the direction of his thinking; even though he did not revert to classicism, he had become a Catholic in religion, and royalist in politics.

If it is the ultimate task of the romantic effort to establish a new mythology, the role of the poet and that of the critic have become still more closely related; and we may therefore finally ask two crucial questions: What criteria does Schlegel recognize as to the quality, the excellence, of a given poem; and secondly, what is his gauge of the reliability of the critical judgment?

Both questions depend for their answer upon the acceptance of a kind of sanction that transcends the individual poet or critic. A poem, Schlegel insists, exercises a constant and unique sort of power by virtue of being an inexhaustible and continually challenging product.[63] The

[61] *Ibid.*, p. 308.

[62] Friedrich von Schlegel, *Sämmtliche Werke*, 2nd ed. (Vienna, 1846), II, 77. See also Schlegel's review of Adam Müller's *Vorlesungen*, in *Deutsche Nationalliteratur*, CXLIII, 405 ff. The importance of "content" and subject matter impressed itself upon Schlegel after 1804, especially in connection with his evolving interest in painting. See "Gemäldebeschreibungen aus Paris und den Niederlanden in den Jahren 1802-1804," in Friedrich Schlegel, *Sämmtliche Werke*, VI (1823), 4 ff.

[63] Minor, II, 185.

critic, confronted by a poem, must above all determine whether or not it possesses this power, whether it displays the imaginative complexity and ironic self-consciousness upon which a poetic structure depends, whether, indeed, it *is* a poem. The criteria for this procedure of critical identification are, as Schlegel himself admits, elusive enough. If we go beyond mere impressionistic statements of taste, we must recognize that what determines the critic's reliability is not any sort of faithfulness to an objective property of the poem; no poem has only one meaning. Its meaning changes with each critical act that is brought to bear upon it. Criticism is effective and valid, therefore, only in proportion to the degree to which it can establish, and subsequently maintain, the meaning of a poem, first in a given historical situation and eventually in the total tradition of poetry. The history of a poem, that is to say, the history of its intellectual vitality, is the only dependable indication of its value or its greatness.[64]

There exists for Schlegel no categorical distinction between literary criticism and literary history. Neither mode, he warns in a review of Adam Müller's *Vorlesungen über die deutsche Wissenschaft und Literatur*, must be pursued by itself; for as no poem, no single work of art, can be assessed by itself but depends for its rank upon the total canon of poetry, so a given performance of literary criticism can derive its validity only from an awareness of its place in the tradition of judgment.[65] To be conscious of this interdependence of the individual critical act and the perspectives of history is the distinction of only the rarest critics—a distinction which even Lessing, that most admired among Schlegel's predecessors, did not attain.[66] Dilthey, in his essay on the origins of hermeneutics, emphasizes the importance in Schlegel's thinking, of the interplay of various critical objectives: "Die Begriffe, welche [ihn] in seinen glänzenden Arbeiten über griechische Poesie, Goethe, Boccaccio leiteten, waren die der inneren Form des Werkes, der Entwicklungsgeschichte des Schriftstellers und des in sich gegliederten Ganzen der Literatur. Und hinter solchen einzelnen Leistungen einer nachkonstruierenden philologischen Kunst lag für ihn der Plan einer Wissenschaft der Kritik, einer ars critica, welche auf eine Theorie des produktiven literarischen Vermögens gegründet sein sollte."[67]

As for Schlegel himself, he hoped that his *Geschichte der alten und neuen Literatur*, those sixteen lectures which he delivered in Vienna in 1812, might point the way towards the kind of "critical" literary history that would never lose sight of the specific individuality of the work of art, but would yet recognize the binding nature of tradition. These, together with his brother's Berlin and Vienna lectures and Adam Müller's

[64] H. Henel, "Friedrich Schlegel und die Grundlagen der modernen literarischen Kritik," *GR*, XX (1945), 81-93.
[65] *Deutsche Nationalliteratur*, CXLIII, 409.
[66] Minor, II, 416.
[67] W. Dilthey *Gesammelte Schriften* (Leipzig, 1924), V, 328.

Vorlesungen, are the most influential documents of the German romantics' conception of literary history. They offer principles of judgment and a synoptic scheme of world literature from Greek and Oriental beginnings to the height of the idealistic faith that remained exemplary throughout the literary historiography of the nineteenth century.

But these lectures, and this must be said in conclusion, however energetic their intellectual grasp, reveal a bias of historical thinking that is of much importance for our estimate of Schlegel's criticism. His faith in the universal presence, the identity, of the spirit and his indifference, therefore, to the concrete circumstances of time and space restricted the effectiveness of his method. He was not lacking in respect for historical fact, but of far greater importance to him was the act of judging. If he recognized it to be one of the primary duties of the critic to understand the variety of historical and aesthetic phenomena without prejudice or sentimentality, he was at the same time possessed by a burning desire to recognize and proclaim the examples of greatness. This is, perhaps, in any critic, one of the unresolvable incongruities of purpose. In Schlegel it created a tension which, for better or for worse, remained a characteristic element of his work from the days of his admiration for Winckelmann to his fanatical devotion in later life to the faith of the Church. It was one of the reasons, I suspect, why his influence upon subsequent literary theory was never so great as that of his more single-minded brother, August Wilhelm. Yet, Friedrich Schlegel's work continues to exercise its strong appeal, not least because it reflects a rare awareness of the precariousness of the critic's task. "I have expressed," Schlegel concludes in his last aphorism,[68] "a few ideas that point to the center; I have greeted the dawn in my way, from my point of view. Let anyone who knows the road do likewise in his way and from his point of view."

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[68] *Ibid.*, II, 306.

THE METAPHOR OF HIEROGLYPHICS IN GERMAN ROMANTICISM

LISELOTTE DIECKMANN

THE young André Gide summarized, in his *Traité du Narcisse* (1891), the poetic theories of the French symbolists in the form of a myth; he described Paradise in the following way:

> Chaste Eden! Jardin des Idées! où les formes, rythmiques et sûres, révélaient sans effort leur nombre; où chaque chose *était* ce qu'elle *paraissait*... Tout était parfait comme un nombre... un accord émanait du rapport des lignes; sur le jardin planait une constante symphonie.
>
> Au centre de l'Eden, Ygdrasil, l'arbre logarithmique, plongeait dans le sol ses racines de vie... Dans l'ombre, contre son tronc, s'appuyait le livre du Mystère—où se lisait la *vérité qu'il faut connaître*. Et le vent, soufflant dans les feuilles de l'arbre, en épelait, le long du jour, les hiéroglyphes nécessaires.

Gide was repeating here a symbol which had appeared frequently in the prose writings of both Baudelaire and Mallarmé and which was used by them to indicate mysterious and essential relationships between nature, language, and poetry. I cannot hope to decipher in this paper the mysterious words written in the great book of nature or to reveal the "truth that one must know." I shall indicate rather some of the historical traditions which form the partly conscious, partly unconscious background of Gide's rich image of Paradise.

Well over a century before Gide another French writer, Diderot, used the metaphor of the hieroglyphic. In his *Lettre sur les sourds et muets* he was concerned with some basic problems of language. How can language, analytical as it is by nature, express the oneness and simultaneous existence in the mind of a complex conception? Diderot finds the answer in poetic expression, that mysterious synthesis of thought, imagery, and sound which simultaneously stirs all the faculties of the mind. Poetic expression is "a web of hieroglyphs which depict thought. In this sense one might say that all poetry is emblematic." Diderot attributed the creation of artistic hieroglyphics to the mysterious power of genius, which he was one of the first eighteenth-century authors to recognize. He tried to penetrate the mystery of artistic hieroglyphs by describing them as the peculiar and expressive sound of words and the position these words take in the melody of a verse. This interpretation, however, dealt only with one of the aspects of the hieroglyph of art, not with its unifying force or form.

Between Diderot's very original and lucid use of the metaphor and its much more mystical use by Baudelaire and Gide there is a historical gap. We cannot bridge this gap by assuming the mysterious influence of

an isolated term such as hieroglyphic. The history of this term is rather the history of an idea which appears at certain times in certain authors in connection with a variety of other ideas and in a particular intellectual climate. The German romanticists take, in some respects, a position between Diderot and the French symbolists. But, while their intellectual climate is very close to that of the symbolists, it is strikingly different from Diderot's. We must therefore seek Diderot's sources for the metaphor as well as other sources which inspired both the German romanticists and the French symbolists.

We shall have to go back to antiquity. A historical survey, however brief, is needed for an understanding of the great fascination which the metaphor had for the German romanticists, a fascination due partly to the mystery surrounding the Egyptian hieroglyphics before they were deciphered in 1822, but mainly to the fact that, through the centuries and throughout the countries of Europe, the Near East, and North Africa, the metaphor had been used to designate symbolic forms of divine mysteries and philosophic thought. Because it was charged with historical tradition it was particularly appealing to the romanticists.

Plato had still understood that the Egyptian hieroglyphics were, in part, letters of the alphabet or grammatical symbols; but this knowledge was gradually lost, mainly because a late type of Egyptian hieroglyphics, the so-called enigmatic hieroglyphics, were indeed no longer mere alphabetic characters but symbols expressing, and at the same time veiling, religious and philosophic ideas. In the year 1419 Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica*, a book of late antiquity, was found. Written in Greek, it described in detail these Egyptian symbols and their meanings and pointed out the intrinsic and, as Gide would call it, necessary relationship between the symbol and the idea symbolized. The book contained fantastic descriptions of animals and emphasized the particular attributes which make them fit to become symbols. While it preserved the Egyptian symbols, it missed their relation to the Egyptian language. It had a tremendous influence, not only on the Renaissance, but throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Some of the authors whom I shall discuss, mainly William Warburton and Herder, quoted abundantly from it; even as late an author as Johann Jakob Wagner, in his *Ideen zu einer allgemeinen Mythologie der alten Welt* (1808), was profoundly and uncritically fascinated by it. The *Hieroglyphica* was a source and a stimulus for the sixteenth- and seventeenth century so-called emblem books, which were often called hieroglyphical and with which most eighteenth-century authors were familiar. These emblem books presented proverbs or *topoi*, general ideas of one kind or another, in words accompanied by symbolic drawings; the drawings were added to the words, not only to make the idea more clearly understood, but also to show the correspondence between various media of

art. Diderot's conception of the oneness of the aesthetic experience found here a first though rather primitive expression.

Another line of tradition starts with the Jewish-Alexandrian allegorical interpretation of the Bible, specifically with Philo. For him the stories of the Old Testament were hieroglyphics of a deeper meaning, which he set out to decipher. Christian as well as Jewish Biblical interpretation in the Middle Ages followed in his footsteps; and a wealth of Christian and cabbalistic symbolism developed, which was welded together in sixteenth-century mysticism and in the secret societies of the Rosicrucians and the Freemasons. The term hieroglyphic itself, as well as certain Egyptian symbols, was kept alive for centuries in this mystic symbolism.

Following this tradition, Swedenborg, the influential eighteenth-century mystic, wrote a book in which he described the analogies of mind and body. He called it *An Hieroglyphical Key to Natural and Spiritual Mysteries, by Way of Representations and Correspondences.* In Novalis, Baudelaire, and many other writers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, we find the metaphor of the hieroglyphic linked with these very problems of analogy and correspondences between nature and spirit.

A third line of tradition, aside from the emblematic and mystical, started with Plato and continued through the Platonic schools. The Cambridge Platonists and many others used the term hieroglyphic to express their views on the relation between the world of reality and the world of ideas.

In the eighteenth century, the metaphor was revived through the discussions on the nature and origin of language. The well-known problem of "signs" and their arbitrary or necessary character with regard to the thing designated provided the metaphor with new life.

These latter discussions are the basis of William Warburton's learned *Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated,* which served as a source for both Diderot and Herder. Warburton intended to prove, in strictly rationalistic terms, that Moses' legation was indeed divine. He strongly attacked mysticism as well as Platonism. Moses' great learning stemmed from Egypt and he brought with him the knowledge of hieroglyphical writing, altering it to suit his purposes. In other words, Warburton explained Hebrew writing as derived from Egyptian writing. Writing is, according to him, a strictly human achievement. He gives up his rationalistic method, however, when he explains the origin of language itself. In contrast to writing, language was given to man by God at the moment of creation. Warburton's very informative book served Diderot's friends of the *Encyclopédie* as a source for their articles on Egypt. But, whereas Warburton repeatedly asserted that the hieroglyphics were *not* created as sacerdotal writings meant to conceal the divine mysteries, the Encyclopedists misconstrued his thought to mean

precisely that a cast of priests used this writing for their secret purposes.

Strangely enough, Herder misinterpreted Warburton in the same way, although for entirely different reasons. In 1774 Herder turned toward mysticism. In this mood he wrote his *Älteste Urkunde des Menschengeschlechts*, in which he explained that the First Book of Moses was indeed the oldest document of mankind since it was written by God himself. Nature is God's first hieroglyph, i.e., His sensuous manifestation intended to be read and understood by man. The words of the Bible are also God's own hieroglyphs meant to interpret nature for man. God taught Adam to feel and understand nature; and man, in his first enthusiastic shock at seeing the creation, learned to speak, write, and read in one moment. Therefore the origins of language and of writing, being the necessary expression of man's first perception of nature, are not, as Warburton had claimed, separate actions, partly due to man's own inventiveness. All of man's intellectual activity is due to God. In his chapter, "Unter der Morgenröte," whose title recalls Jakob Boehme's *Aurora*, Herder says that we re-experience the separation of light and darkness every morning in the rising of the sun; every dawn, therefore, is a hieroglyph of the original creation. And he continues: "The morning painter is the only painter of creation, and the morning singer, who praises God in the entire living, awakening nature is the poet of creation." Against a genuine religious background Herder emphasizes here the aesthetic aspects of nature. He sincerely endeavored to combine Shaftesbury's aesthetic thought with the mystical thought of Hamann who, by the way, also speaks of the hieroglyphical Adam. The *Älteste Urkunde* provided the generation of the romanticists with a wealth of enthusiastic thoughts, images, and feelings—one of the foremost being the idea that nature is a symbol and a hieroglyph of God.

The morning painter who fulfilled the hieroglyphic function assigned to him by Herder was Philipp Otto Runge. Of all his allegorical sketches and drawings only one painting was carried out in color: "Morning." It abounds in symbolism; colors and flowers, the gestures of the allegorical figures, and the ornamental arabesques which surround the painting sing, in a hieroglyphical way, the praise of God's creation. Runge's paintings, meant to be symbolical, contain such eminently literary thoughts as that of different levels of symbolic interpretation. In his "Lehrstunde der Nachtigal" he claims that the same idea occurs three times, "becoming more and more abstract and symbolic the more it is freed from the painting." Runge painted landscapes with the idea in mind that landscape, too, is only a symbol, an externalization of the eternal spirit, God. However, like Herder, his aesthetic interest in nature often covered and concealed his sincere religious thoughts. He even goes beyond Herder when he claims that

it is *man's* creativeness which breathes the living spirit into everything. "Man urges his own feelings onto the objects thereby giving to everything meaning and language." The shift of emphasis is from God to His creation, i.e., to man and nature.

Runge was more firmly grounded in mystic tradition than his romantic friends realized. His allegorical plates contain a number of traditional emblems, such as the serpent who devours his own tail—that age-old symbol of the universe. In more than one respect his artistic impetus is similar to that of Blake, with whose work he had become acquainted while studying art in Copenhagen. Both artists liked to illustrate poetry, thus consciously and intentionally following the emblematic tradition which expressed an idea simultaneously in words and in drawings. But above all, both, although each painted in his own personal and highly individualistic fashion, were still part of the Renaissance tradition with its strong tendency toward symbolization.

Runge himself, as well as his contemporaries, Tieck, Görres, and Friedrich Schlegel, repeatedly called his paintings hieroglyphical. And Runge strongly influenced his friends, as the following passage from Friedrich Schlegel's *Ansichten und Ideen von der christlichen Kunst* (summer 1804) shows:

> Hätte nun ein solcher [i.e., an original genius] erst den richtigen Begriff von der Kunst wiedergefunden, daß die symbolische Bedeutung und Andeutung göttlicher Geheimnisse ihr eigentlicher Zweck, alles übrige aber nur Mittel, dienendes Glied und Buchstabe sei, so würde er vielleicht merkwürdige Werke ganz neuer Art hervorbringen: Hieroglyphen, wahrhafte Sinnbilder, aber mehr aus Naturgefühlen und Naturansichten oder Ahnungen willkührlich zusammengesetzt, als sich anschließend an die alte Weise der Vorwelt. Eine Hieroglyphe, ein göttliches Sinnbild soll jedes wahrhaft so zu nennende Gemählde sein; die Frage ist aber nur, ob der Mahler seine Allegorie sich selbst schaffen, oder aber sich an die alten Sinnbilder anschließen soll, die durch Tradition gegeben und geheiligt sind...

Schlegel had used the metaphor of the hieroglyphic already in his *Gespräch über die Poesie* (1800). All spiritual allusions and *Spiele* of art are for him only distant copies of the infinite *Spiel* of the world, that work of art of the Creator which continually reshapes and reflects itself. Every beautiful mythology is nothing but the hieroglyphic expression of the surrounding nature, "in that illumination of imagination and love which is produced by the spark of ecstasy." Therefore, individual passions, events, and situations do not in themselves constitute a work of art; to the true artist all these are only allusions to something higher and infinite; they are "hieroglyphics of the one eternal love and of the sacred life of formative nature."

We are here at the very center of romantic thinking. The work of art, although the focusing point of most romantic theories, is never "the thing itself," but always a reflection of the higher truth as revealed in nature. Nature is a hieroglyph of God; and art is a hieroglyph

of nature *and* God. God himself, in the act of creation, wrote, as a work of art, the book of nature; man, the image of God, writes, in his creative act, the book of art. Both God and man write their books in hieroglyphics that can be understood by the initiated. Diderot's idea of the connection of the genius with the hieroglyphs of art is elaborated here in Christian terms. In his very last lectures, given in Dresden a few weeks before his death, Schlegel still included these significant words:

> Die Kunst ... selbst ihrem innersten Wesen nach ... [ist] eine höhere geistige Natursprache [the word Natursprache is taken from Jakob Boehme], oder wenn man will, eine innere Hieroglyphen-Schrift und Ursprache der Seele ... Denn der Schlüssel dazu liegt nicht etwa in einer vorher getroffenen Verabredung, wie bei der sinnreich schönen, aber doch bloß conventionell sinnbildlichen orientalischen Blumensprache, sondern in dem Gefühl und in der Seele selbst; deren ewige Grundgefühle hier, soll man sagen—erweckt, oder wieder erweckt werden, in diesem innern Seelenworte der wahren Kunst ...

Thus, the hieroglyph of art is not an "arbitrary sign"; it is the very key that opens the path to the truth of the soul; it is, in Swedenborg's language, a hieroglyphic key leading to, and expressing, the innermost secrets of life.

Although Schlegel was fascinated by Champollion's deciphering of the Egyptian hieroglyphics and studied his publication thoroughly, he felt that Champollion had only taken the first step; he had, according to Schlegel, only deciphered those hieroglyphics that stand for letters of the alphabet and had omitted the much more important hieroglyphics that are symbols of ideas. The conception of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, cherished by the Renaissance, namely that they are mere unlinguistic symbols of ideas, still prevailed. Even for Baudelaire, who certainly knew about Champollion's discovery, the hieroglyphics still retained their old mysterious charm, years after this charm had been dispelled by scholarship.

Novalis' use of the metaphor is closely linked with a number of related terms and ideas, and appears, in the *Fragments*, in very complex contexts. It cannot therefore be discussed here in detail. Novalis' key word is analogy, that "magic wand" which opens the meanings of many of nature's and man's hieroglyphics. Novalis transforms in his thinking Fichte's ideas about the *Ich* and the *Nicht-Ich* and blends them with the old Christian thought of the analogy that exists between the visible and the invisible world. He can therefore say that the *Nicht-Ich* is a symbol of the *Ich*; or, conversely, that man is a source of analogies for the world, and that the *Ich* has an hieroglyphical power. Often he prefers such terms as *Zeichen* or *Chiffern* to the term hieroglyphic, or he speaks of Sanskrit where we would expect Egyptian. This vacillation indicates that language, no matter in which specific form it appears, is for Novalis a "microcosm of signs and sounds" revealing the mys-

teries of life. He says in *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, which has an Egyptian setting:

> Mannichfache Wege gehen die Menschen. Wer sie verfolgt und vergleicht, wird wunderliche Figuren entstehen sehn; Figuren, die zu jener großen Chiffernschrift zu gehören scheinen, die man überall, auf Flügeln, Eierschalen, in Wolken, im Schnee ... erblickt. In ihnen ahndet man den Schlüssel dieser Wunderschrift, die Sprachlehre derselben, allein die Ahndung will sich selbst in keine feste Formen fügen, und scheint kein höherer Schlüssel werden zu wollen ... Nicht lange darauf sprach einer: Keiner Erklärung bedarf die heilige Schrift. Wer wahrhaft spricht, ist des ewigen Lebens voll, und wunderbar verwandt mit echten Geheimnissen dünkt uns seine Schrift, denn sie ist ein Akkord aus des Weltalls Symphonie.

The details of this quotation remind us of the quotation from Gide with which we started. This is, indeed, the spiritual climate in which many of the French symbolists, most of all Baudelaire, lived. Baudelaire probably never read Schlegel or Novalis, but rather their successors, E. T. A. Hoffmann, Richard Wagner, and Heine; we know that Gide read Novalis only after the completion of the *Traité du Narcisse*. Nevertheless we may say that Baudelaire's and the early Gide's views on nature, art, and language are on the whole so close to those of the German romanticists that the symbolists' metaphor of the hieroglyphic receives from the romantists' its true perspective.

In addition to Schlegel, one might also consider Wackenroder, Fichte, Schelling, and Görres, and above all Franz von Baader, who translated and promoted the works of St. Martin, that late eighteenth-century French mystic whose importance for the romanticists and the symbolists needs to be emphasized. The metaphor occurs in connection with mystic number symbolism, or it is a simple metaphor for language in the innumerable language theories of the period. It occurs as a metaphor for mythology and fable in the equally innumerable histories and theories of ancient mythology. It is found most often in connection with religious thought, but it is also used in idealistic philosophy. Wherever it appears, it represents the nexus between the tangible and the intangible, the finite and the infinite. It had meaning for a generation that tried to reconcile the dualism of the spirit and the flesh, and to establish a correspondence between idea and form. In the many trends of thought which meet in German romanticism, it is the key metaphor that connects them all. In discussions of Shaftesbury and Plato, of idealistic and mystic philosophy, of mythology and linguistics —in all there was a central place for hieroglyphical thinking.[1]

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[1] This paper was read before the Germanic Section of the Modern Language Association at the New York meeting in December 1954.

DOSTOEVSKY'S AESTHETICS AND SCHELLING'S PHILOSOPHY OF ART

HEINRICH STAMMLER

IN HIS *History of Russian Philosophy*, N. Lossky quotes Vladimir Solovyov's characterization of Dostoevsky's way of absorbing and handling ideas: "In the realm of ideas, Dostoevsky was a visionary and an artist, rather than a logical thinker consequent with himself."[1] Dostoevsky's artistry, however, cannot be defined, in Schiller's words, as "bewußtlos bildend"—unconsciously forming and producing.

According to Schelling's *System des transscendentalen Idealismus*, in the work of art we have the highest result of the fusion of the unconscious creative energy with which nature, the universe as a whole, is imbued and the free conscious effort of the artist.[2] If we recognize the validity of this premise, then in Dostoevsky the conscious element—the reflection upon his art, its meaning and purpose, and the means of its realization—was rather strong. Again and again in his journalistic and critical writings he dwells upon the significance of art for human existence, the individual and society. He never tired of affirming that art draws its main inspiration from reality, and that art, being an organic outgrowth of the human mind, remains faithful to man in his empirical existence. This he expressed with remarkable vigor in his substantial article, "Mr. . . . bov and the Problem of Art,"[3] an eloquent polemic against Dobrolyubov, one of the leaders of the radical and utilitarian school in Russian literary criticism.

But the question arises: What did Dostoevsky mean by all these references to reality, real life, historical existence, and manifestation of the human organism? We must look to his creative work to find the key to the sometimes cryptic statements made in his articles and essays.

In 1861, about the time when he was working on the article cited, he wrote a sketch called "St. Petersburg Musings in Poetry and Prose," in which he relates a personal experience which was to have important consequences for his career as a creative writer. He describes how, in a kind of ecstatic vision, he saw everything real dissolve into an ideal world of phantoms, and the phantoms, in turn, congeal into a kind of *higher reality*. In such visions the eternal is experienced tangibly; the

[1] N. Lossky, *History of Russian Philosophy* (New York, 1951), p. 119.

[2] Schelling, *Werke*, II, 286. All quotations from Schelling follow the 1907 edition of his selected works in three volumes.

[3] Published in 1861 in the journal *Vremya* (Time), of which Dostoevsky was the chief editor.

temporal, on the other hand, receives its significance through its relationship to the timeless.[4]

Whenever Dostoevsky refers to reality, it is, actually, this kind of superreality which he has in mind. In this inner world of superreality, man, although harassed by demons, is desperately pursuing the ideal which is to soothe all conflict and transfigure all ugliness, material as well as moral.[5] This transfiguration of visible reality in the quest for the ideal or, as Dostoevsky frequently puts it, for ultimate beauty, is the focal point of his aesthetics.

As a corollary to this, Dostoevsky's aesthetics might be characterized as metaphysical aesthetics, according to which anything is beautiful which possesses a specific relation to ultimate reality. (Hegel thought that in art we meet the beautiful as the absolute in sensuous existence, the actuality of the idea in the guise of limited manifestations.)[6] Consequently, we shall have to deal here with theories, opinions about the beautiful per se, rather than with exact definitions of the elements constituting beauty as a phenomenon in time and space.

Dostoevsky's aesthetics was an assessment of beauty according to moral and religious standards. In his opinion, aesthetics does not deal primarily with the analysis of the elements of formal beauty—although he possessed a great immediate awareness of formal beauty—but rather with grandeur of theme and subject matter in terms of moral, social, and religious values. He felt vividly that a work of art was an organic entity which had to be appreciated as unique and inspired through intuition, not by analysis and discursive synthesis of theoretical reason.[7] "We believe that art has its own integral and organic life . . . Art is just as much a human need as eating and drinking. The need for beauty and creation is inseparable from man . . . Man thirsts for beauty and accepts it without condition, simply because it is beauty. Beauty inheres in everything healthy. It is harmony, and it contains a guarantee of tranquillity."[8] In the novel *The Possessed* he states: "Mankind can live without science, and even without bread. But it cannot live without beauty. The whole mystery is there and the whole of history."

The conception of beauty as mystery, however, is part and parcel of Dostoevsky's general view that the essence of life as such is beyond the reach of dissecting reason. The following statement was found among his notes: "Life, throbbing and animated, cannot be grasped

[4] Fedor Stepun, *Dostojewskij—Weltschau und Weltanschauung* (Heidelberg, 1950), pp. 10-11.

[5] An early instance for this substitution of a world of phantoms for reality can be found in the tale "Khozyaika" (The Landlady) of 1847. English translation in *The Gambler and Other Stories* (New York, 1917), p. 264.

[6] G. W. F. Hegel, *Sämtliche Werke*, Xa (Leipzig, 1931), 151.

[7] Cf. his letter to Apollon Maikov, a Slavophile poet. English translation in Dostoevsky, *Letters and Reminiscences* (London, 1923), pp. 71 f.

[8] *Vremya*, 1861.

by the understanding, only the heart can understand it."[9] This emotional, visionary intuitivism was, of course, in good Russian tradition. In one of his essays, Ivan Kireyevsky insists: "Life per se is beyond the grasp of all logical, academic operations and methods; that is why the process we call life is, in fact, alive. It has its own essence, more real than any mathematical abstractions."[10] Kireyevsky had been a kind of frustrated metaphysical genius in the camp of the romantic traditionalists, the so-called Slavophiles. The poet and critic Apollon Grigoryev, Dostoevsky's friend and collaborator in the editorial office of *Vremya*, considered Kireyevsky a philosophical talent of the very first order.[11]

When Dostoevsky reappeared on the Russian literary scene in 1859 after years of exile, eager to throw himself into the creative process as well as into the battle of ideas going on during the great reforms of Alexander II, it was not easy for him to make his ideas clear. The long sojourn in Siberia, far from all contacts with the culture of his time, had deprived him of opportunity to sharpen his wits in social and intellectual intercourse with his peers. Furthermore, he lacked the terminology for expressing his most profound convictions in a way that would appeal to the educated classes. It is true that as soon as he left the penitentiary he wrote to his brother with a request for books, referring to Hegel as important above all else. He does not seem, however, to have really penetrated Hegel's thought as other Russians of that age had endeavored to do.[12] On the other hand, Schiller had been one of the deep, unforgettable, formative experiences of his youth, and the impression of Schiller's moral idealism and lofty sentimentalism was an abiding one. The studies of Meier-Gräfe and Dmitri Čyževśkyj make this clear.[13]

At the same time, many of Dostoevsky's formulations of his ideas on the connection between art and the moral ideal, between the creative force in the universe and the divine principle animating the world, have

[9] *Der unbekannte Dostojewski*, ed. R. Fülöp-Miller and F. Eckstein (Munich, 1926), p. 517.

[10] Iwan Kirejewskij, *Drei Essays* (Munich, 1921), p. 45.

[11] Apollon Grigoryev, *Vospominaniya* (Memoirs) (Moscow, 1930), p. 445. See also the Kireyevsky studies of V. Gershenzon in *Istoricheskiya Zapiski* (Berlin, 1923) and of Alexandre Koyré in *Études sur l'histoire de la pensée philosophique en Russie* (Paris, 1950).

[12] The alleged completion of Hegel's system by Dostoevsky's ideas, which is the subject of G. Belzer's study, *Hegel en Dostoyevski* (Leiden, 1953), on closer scrutiny turns out to be more or less coincidental, as a consequence of the grounding of both authors in Plato. After L. Grossmann catalogued Dostoevsky's library and demonstrated that he must have been a student of Plato, A. S. Steinberg in his *Die Idee der Freiheit* (Lucerne, 1936) pointed out Platonic elements in Dostoevsky's world view.

[13] Julius Meier-Gräfe, *Dostojewski—der Dichter* (Berlin, 1926). D. Čyževśkyj. "Schiller und die Brüder Karamazov," *Zeitschrift für slavische Philologie*, VI (1929). Rich in material on the crosscurrents of metaphysical thought in nineteenth-century Russia are Boris Jakovenko's *Geschichte des Hegelianismus in Rußland* (Prague, 1940) and D. Čyževśkyj's *Hegel bei den Slaven* (Reichenberg, 1934). See also Alexandre Koyré, *op. cit.*

an unmistakable Schellingian ring about them. Dostoevsky as a young man of letters in the St. Petersburg of the 1840s might have heard something of Schelling's system, but it is not likely that he acquired a thorough knowledge of it. The seat of Schellingian studies and influence was Moscow rather than St. Petersburg; there Slavophiles like Kireyevsky and intellectuals like Chaadayev, who corresponded with Schelling, Prince Odoevsky, and the young Stankevich had all been swayed by the idealistic nature philosophy and aesthetics of this romantic philosopher. A school of academic Schellingianism had sprung up in Russia, with its most noted representatives at Moscow University, among them Pogodin, a leading Slavophile journalist and historian, and Nadezhdin, who introduced his students to Schelling's philosophy of art and poetry.[14]

Apollon Grigoryev[15] graduated from this school in 1842, saturated with Schelling's aesthetics, Hegelian dialects, and a rapturous enthusiasm for the work of E. T. A. Hoffman. He soon became a contributor to Pogodin's journal, *Moskvityanin* (The Muscovite), and made friends with the poet and defender of pure poetry, Fet, and the dramatist, Ostrovsky. During all these years, his infatuation with Schelling did not diminish. In his most revealing book he states: "We stand between the transcendentalists (meaning the Schellingians) and the nihilists."[16] An artist by nature, the greatest bohemian of the Russian world of letters before Alexander Blok and Sergey Yesenin, he felt deeply the mysterious nature of man. He was tormented by doubts as to the blessings of growing rationality and scientism with their natural consequences of conceptuality and mathematical abstraction. What he strove for most valiantly was the restoration of the feeling for a mystical unity of all being, what he called organic wholeness, and a sense of immediate awareness of concrete being. He found in history and historically revealed religion an irrefutable proof of the concrete existence of a people in its organic unity. "By Orthodoxy I mean a spontaneous historical principle which is destined to live and create new forms of life."[17] He set great value on creativity and linked it with a primordial aesthetic principle. In this frame of mind it was not too difficult for him to come into close sympathetic contact with Dostoevsky, who had main-

[14] W. Setschkarew's *Schellings Einfluß in der russischen Literatur der 20-30er Jahre des XIX. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1939) is a thorough study of Schelling's influence on Russian thought.

[15] In his *History of Russian Philosophy* (New York, 1953), Father Zenkovsky gives a concise account of this little known yet important writer and his position in Russian intellectual history (I, 401-406). Professor Ettore Lo Gatto's *L'estetica e la poetica in Russia* (Florence, 1947) contains a valuable exposition of Grigoryev's aesthetic views and of his long article on the principles of literary criticism written in 1858.

[16] *Moi literaturnyie i nravstvennyie skital'chestva* (My Literary and Moral Wanderings) (Moscow, 1930), p. 80.

[17] Zenkovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 402.

tained: "The force of creation, the basis of all art, lives within man as a manifestation of one part of his organism."[18]

Although Grigoryev had studied Hegel, Hegel's panlogism remained foreign to him. What attracted him to Schelling and made him become the romantic philosopher's prophet was just that dialectical weakness in Schelling's thought which was so severely criticized by professional philosophers. As the highest expression of the absolute, art is endowed, for Schelling, with speculative significance, which is presented in images and thus has symbolic character. The symbolic side of art, however, is at the same time religiously significant. Likewise, the concrete patterns of religion, incarnate in mythology, belong also to the realm of art. Religion and art well up from the same source—speculative imagination. There are no abstract works of art, engendered by discursive reason only. In the same way, there is no abstract, purely rational religion. Schelling maintains that we cannot think of religion except in a historical and aesthetic relationship.

Schelling's critics have pointed out, however, that he was not able to solve the dilemma between the ideal and the real, the infinite and the finite, by rational speculation in logical terms. On the contrary, he eventually cut the thread of discourse by substituting art for dialectical progress.[19] But it was just this philosophical failure that endeared Schelling to poets and critics of the next generation, and particularly to those young Russians who had been looking for a philosophical justification of their deification of art and the creative process. Long after Schelling was scorned or forgotten in Germany, he was still proclaimed the herald of at least one significant group of Russian youth in their creative storm and stress.

Being an artist, Grigoryev did not lose his grip on concrete reality. But he also wanted to behold it in the light of the ideal, just as Dostoevsky did. "The ideal is only the fragrance and flower of the real," as he put it.[20] His exclamation, "For me life is something mysterious, something inexhaustible, an immense breadth, in which logical conclusions disappear like waves in the ocean,"[21] and the statement, "The logical status of scientific laws is beyond question; the world-wide work on these abstract laws proceeds quite correctly, but in a purely logical world . . . which lacks the inexhaustible creativity of life,"[22] read like a comment on Dostoevsky's assertion that life cannot be comprehended by the pure inteilectual act. Grigoryev, who was so fond of alluding to "the vague and mysterious muteness of sensations"[23] (meaning the extralogical plentitude of immediate awareness, in Zenkovsky's defini-

[18] From "Mr. . . . bov and the Problem of Art."
[19] Richard Kroner, *Von Kant bis Hegel* (Tübingen, 1924), II, 105.
[20] Zenkovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 403.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 404.
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ibid.*

tion), agreed with Schelling that "unconsciousness gives works of art their uninvestigable profundity."[24] "Schelling," he said, "destroyed the Idol of the Abstract." In another context he declared: "Whatever I begin, I always come to the same thing—a profound and tormenting need to believe in an Ideal and a 'Jenseits.' "[25] This ideal as well as the "Jenseits" he found foreshadowed in works of art. When it ripens, the deepest knowledge about ultimate realities, he asserted, strives (involuntarily and unconsciously) to take on the garb of art. Thus art alone incarnates in its products that divine will which is present, though unknown, in the atmosphere of an age. This is also true of Dostoevsky's "higher reality," the inner forces that move the age and the life of nations to a higher degree than all facts which can be measured and grasped statistically. All this reflects Schelling's conceptions as stated in the dialogue, *Bruno oder über das göttliche und natürliche Prinzip der Dinge:*

> Insofern nun der Hervorbringende das Göttliche nicht erkennt, als solcher erscheint er nothwendig mehr wie ein Profaner als wie ein Eingeweihter. Obgleich er es aber nicht erkennt, übt er es doch von Natur aus, und offenbart, ohne es zu wissen, denen, die es verstehen, die verborgensten aller Geheimnisse, die Einheit des göttlichen und natürlichen Wesens und das Innere jener allerseligsten Natur, in welcher kein Gegensatz ist; daher die Dichter schon im höchsten Alterthum als die Ausleger der Götter und von ihnen getriebene und begeisterte Menschen verehrt worden sind.[26]

Dostoevsky himself was well aware that there is mystery at the bottom of all artistic revelation. The revelation of the beautiful, a character in his novel, *A Raw Youth*, remarks, becomes even more beautiful through the fact that all this is mystery.

Dostoevsky, although he read German, was far from being proficient in that language. The only foreign language which he mastered to some degree was French. Thus he hardly would have been able to study Schelling's philosophy in the original. Moreover, he scarcely would have had the time for it during those difficult years of the late 1850s and early 1860s, when, together with his brother Mihail, Strahov, the philosopher and critic, and Grigoryev, he was editing the journal *Vremya*. But we know that the contacts between the four men were very close indeed at that time, Grigoryev often fulfilling the part of stimulator, purveyor, and commentator of philosophical and aesthetic theories. When he declared, "Great is the significance of art. Only art brings something entirely new, organic and fruitful into life,"[27] he was following Schelling, who had declared that the immediate cause of all creativity and thus of all art is nothing but the creative principle as such, God, who made the universe as an absolute work of art in eternal

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 405.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 403.
[26] Schelling, *Werke*, II, 435.
[27] Zenkovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

beauty.[28] It is this eternal beauty, incarnate historically in the figure of Christ which, according to Dostoevsky, can become visible to man, once the transfiguration of nature and social relations has completely transformed the inner life of an individual.[29] Only then is it possible for man to see nature in her innermost reality, not merely as a system of mathematically established relationships, but as transfigured by the infusion of God's infinite ideality into reality, as Schelling had described it. The immediate awareness of this transfiguration spells salvation. So Dostoevsky could pronounce in his polemics with Dobrolyubov (written in 1861 when he was collaborating closely with Grigoryev): "The ideal of beauty is a state of perfect sanity—salvation." It is this vision of transfiguring beauty which causes Prince Myshkin (in *The Idiot*) to say: "It is beauty which will save the world."

Thus Schiller's and particularly Schelling's conceptions of the beautiful as the incarnation of the ideal, realized, objectified, and individualized, helped Dostoevsky formulate his aesthetics in religious terms. The terminology of metaphysical aesthetics as he received it from Schiller and Schelling through the mediation of Grigoryev presented him with a timely medium for his ideas. Even when he rebelled against an all too narrow definition of art as a tool in the service of the practically useful and progressive, and insisted that the artist, while creating, should not think about the effect of his work on the human will and human action—even then he could find confirmation in Schelling for his thought that every true work of art is useful on a higher level and that this usefulness will later become apparent. For the German philosopher had stated: "Each artist can create only as much as is compatible with the concept he has of himself as a being participating in the divine essence."[30] The artist must, however, follow only his creative urge, the warrant for the consistency of his work with itself. If the creative impulse, eventually, is something through which man communicates with the divine, the fruits of this activity must be useful in a higher sense, inasmuch as they benefit not only ephemeral purposes but the integral man. Later, in his remarks on an exhibition, Dostoevsky returns to this favorite subject and declares that the true artist must trust his inner idea (the ideal) more than projected external reality.[31] This sounds like a comment on Grigoryev's statement in his long dissertation on the principles of literary criticism (1858): "Art is the reflection of the ideal, and criticism is the interpretation of this reflection." The wording, however, seems to point back to Schelling's definition of art in his *Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums*

[28] Schelling, *Werke*, III, 33-34.

[29] Dostoevsky would have agreed with the statement in the "Notes on Poetry" of the modern American poet, Richard Eberhart: "Christ is the poem absolute ... Christ is impossible to overhaul ..." (*Mid-Century Poets*, Boston, 1951, p. 227).

[30] Schelling, *Werke*, III, 108.

[31] *The Diary of a Writer* (New York, 1949), I, 83.

(1802): "Nichts von dem, was der gemeinere Sinn Kunst nennt, kann den Philosophen beschäftigen: sie ist ihm eine nothwendige, aus dem Absoluten unmittelbar ausfließende Erscheinung, und nur sofern sie als solche dargethan und bewiesen werden kann, hat sie Realität für ihn."[32]

Dostoevsky's attempt to trace the necessity of artistic production farther back than the mere creative instinct or urge, which parallels Schelling's definition of the source of artistic production as enthusiasm, also shows how helpful he found the conceptual language of nineteenth-century metaphysical aesthetics.

Man's elemental demand for the beautiful goes further back than the artistic urge. The question why man should insist on this demand, often in perverted or trivial terms, is answered by Dostoevsky: "The demand for the beautiful originates in man's conflict with external reality, in a lack of harmony, in the fact that he has to struggle, in the fateful intensity of his material existence."[33] Art is the only means by which this seemingly eternal or absolute state of conflict can be overcome, because it is through artistic means that the ideal can be incarnated. The rapture produced by intense contemplation of artistic perfection reveals a state of utter indifference, e.g., a state of mind where there is no more conflict, only an immediate awareness of the basic total unity of the world. Conflict is exposed by art as a mere illusion of material existence.

It was admittedly one of the aims of Dostoevsky to embody in his novels the essential spirit of his age and of his people. This is another reason why, in the end, his psychological realism is directed toward an ultimate spiritualization of his characters; for even the most uncompromising individuality reveals moral attitudes or ideas which are of universal significance. It is as if, in his work as an artist, he was following the line laid out by Grigoryev: "Art alone incarnates in its products that which is present, though unknown, in the atmosphere of an age." The organic connection of works of art with the whole age and with the historical process makes art the judge of the times.[34] Remembering Schelling and consistent with his own stress on immediate awareness, Grivoryev sermonized, in full agreement with Dostoevsky, in an age which believed deeply in the omnipotence of scientific knowledge: "Art realizes the concrete unity of the Ideal and the Real. Thus, only in art do we find the genuine creativity of life itself. Science grasps the ideal constitution of being, but it tears itself away from throbbing reality; hence art is above science."[35]

In his polemical and critical writings Dostoevsky took up the cudgel

[32] Schelling, *Werke*, II, 675.
[33] "Mr. . . . bov and the Problem of Art."
[34] Zenkovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 405.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 404.

in behalf of an art that is always conscious of the ideal, but at the same time never lost the sense of moral responsibility towards the people and humanity in general. He therefore opposed the two warring camps of the pure aesthetes and the utilitarian radicals and progressives. This position is consistent with his development as a novelist and his place in the framework of Russian letters of his time. But the theoretical foundations were laid by Grigoreyev, especially in his *Survey of the Foundations, the Significance and the Methods of Modern Literary Criticism.*[36] In this work, Grigoryev takes a stand against purely utilitarian criticism, for the same reason that Dostoevsky expressed later in his controversy with Dobrolyubov. Grigoryev is above all the champion of the freedom of art. It is true, the artist has to strive untiringly for the incarnation of the ideal in his work; but then, the ideal has many facets and many possibilities of realization, according to the various degrees and preferences of the creative force in man. To limit the function of art to the promotion of narrow though socially desirable goals means to degrade its intrinsic prophetism to mere propaganda and socially useful advertizing. On the other hand, a merely technical, aesthetically analytical approach in dealing with works of art would leave out of the picture the prophetic task of true art, its divine message. It would, so to speak, see the artist only in his quality of *poietes*, the artificer, but not in his calling as *poeta vates*, as sèer, prophet, and bearer of revelations.

Finally, Grigoryev utters a warning against a merely historically oriented criticism. This might cause surprise, since he was a Slavophile sympathizer, with a fine historical sense, who called himself a *pochvennik*, a man rooted in the soil of his native land. Accepting Schelling's concept of organism he said, referring obviously to the historical destiny of the Russian people in their relationship to the West: "Every national organism formed in whatever manner brings its own organic principle into life. Each of these or similar organisms is closed within itself, indispensable to itself, endowed with the power to live according to its own laws of existence, not obliged to serve as a mere transitory pattern for another organism." But what he opposed in historical criticism was relativism. "A relative truth is nothing but an empty phrase. A lack of a stable ideal, not a relative one, the lack of positive convictions—these are the cause for the ineptness of mere historical criticism, its decadence—and the cause for the reaction against it of exclusively formalistic criticism."

Art, according to Grigoryev, in its ideal fulfillment is "universal, vital, and at the same time national, even local—all in one." Seen from the point of view of the artist, art is neither the product of pure personal inspiration nor an unconscious production and projection of the Zeitgeist and the spirit of the locale. It is to be found rather in the accord

[36] See note 15 above.

of all these factors plus the creative ability of the artist, and is thus established as a complex, yet harmonious organicity, mirroring the organic unity of life.

Dostoevsky, in basic agreement with these ideas, adjusted them, for the rest of his life, to his own purposes. In his enthusiastic speech in honor of Pushkin in 1880, he extolled the unique achievement of this Russian genius, who, by fulfilling his destiny as the poet of his people, transcended the borders of the national to become a universal symbol of all that is noble, elevated, and beautiful in man's hopes and aspirations. For a moment Dostoevsky succeeded in uniting the hostile factions of traditionalists and radicals in common homage to Pushkin, who, he proclaimed, belonged not only to the Russian people but to all mankind. Later in the same year, Dostoevsky's position was severely criticized by various groups. The liberal publicist Gradovsky claimed that he had left truth, beauty, and goodness, as revealed in the work of art, too much a matter of individual perception and appreciation, thus neglecting social significance.[37] More interesting, perhaps, is the sharp criticism formulated by Konstantin Leontyev, an uncompromising orthodox conservative of strict Byzantine, that is, ascetic, pessimistic, and apocalyptic observance. He would have none of the idealized Russian nationalism of the Slavophiles nor the humanitarian, idealistic Christianity of Dostoevsky, which he called "rosy-colored religion." In a polemical article he pointed out that the idealistic fusion of moral love, love for God and the good, *agape* or charity, with love for the beautiful in its sensuous appearance is a fallacy, since the latter often reveals only a refined taste or an effort to produce sensuously beautiful things in a world that is conditioned by monotony and ugliness, moral as well as physical:

> In my opinion, Dostoevsky's speech is a fiery, inspired, red-hot oration, but its foundations are utterly false, for it is illegitimate to confound so rashly and crudely, as Dostoevsky did, the objective love of the poet, the love of a fine taste that needs variety, manysidedness, an antithesis, perhaps even a tragical struggle, with moral love, with the feeling of mercy and the aspiration towards universal meekness.[38]

It may be pointed out, however, that Dostoevsky was too subtle not to see that a dangerous ambiguity hovers about the concept of beauty. This ambiguity can be traced to two conditioning circumstances. One is the limitless number of possibilities of human fulfillment, negative as well as positive. Dostoevsky causes one of his heroes, Dmitri Karamazov, to remark: "Too wide is the soul of man. I would have made him narrower." The other is the fact that the ideal, in order to manifest itself as symbolic beauty, has to become incarnate; it has, literally, to materialize. But there is in the fallen nature of man the tendency to be

[37] Dostoevsky, *Diary*, II, 981.
[38] From an article in the journal *Varshavski Dnevnik*, July-Aug. 1880.

carried away by mere sensuous beauty, to overlook the symbol. And beauty without the symbolic reference to the ideal can destroy a man by making him a mere instrument of lust. Dostoevsky called this kind of beauty, beauty in the fallen state, the beauty of Sodom.[39] Dmitri Karamazov, his mouthpiece for his metaphysical aesthetics, exclaims:

> Beauty is a terrible thing, so terrible, because it is indefinable, and you cannot define it because God has given us only riddles but not the answers. Here all the limits are confounded, here all the contradictions live together. Sometimes a man, endowed with a noble heart and a powerful mind, starts with the ideal of the Madonna, only to end with the ideal of Sodom. It is still more frightening if someone, cherishing the ideal of Sodom in his heart, does not reject also the ideal of the Madonna. His heart even sincerely aches for it, as in the days of his innocent youth... Now where is beauty? In Sodom? Believe me, for most people it resides just there... The awful thing is that beauty is not only terrible, but also mysterious. It is here that God fights with the devil, and the human heart is the battlefield.

It is Dostoevsky's abhorrence of beauty in its intramundane, sensuous aspects, shorn of all transcendent symbolism, which sometimes makes him sound so harsh, and arouses in serious readers grave doubts as to his real sense of material beauty and humane benevolence. It is true, he was quite capable of becoming impatient with sensuous man when he perceived him threatened by the temptation that lies hidden in objectified beauty. These moods, however, grew out of his deep concern lest the life-giving force of the transcendent symbol contained in all beautiful appearance should be lost.

Dostoevsky's strivings for an artistic fulfillment of his aesthetics can, perhaps, be best expressed in the words of Schelling, to whom he and his friends owed so much: "Der innige Bund, welcher die Kunst und Religion vereint, die gänzliche Unmöglichkeit, einerseits der ersten eine andere poetische Welt als innerhalb der Religion und durch Religion zu geben, die Unmöglichkeit auf der andern Seite, die letztere zu einer wahrhaft objektiven Erscheinung anders als durch die Kunst zu bringen, machen die wissenschaftliche Erkenntniß derselben dem ächten Religiösen auch schon in dieser Beziehung zur Nothwendigkeit."[40]

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[39] The ambiguous as well as the tragic aspect of beauty is stressed in R. Lauth's book, *Die Philosophie Dostojewskis* (Munich, 1950), pp. 368-370.

[40] Schelling, *Werke*, II, 682.

NARRATIVE LOGIC AND IMITATION IN *THE FAERIE QUEENE*

W. J. B. Owen

IN AN EARLIER paper[1] an attempt was made to show, amongst other things, that the discrepancies in narrative logic which occur in *The Faerie Queene*, and especially in Books III and IV, provide no valid evidence for the existence of a version of the poem more primitive and more logical than the present version. The inadequacy of such evidence lies in its ambiguity; for a flaw in narrative logic may arise either from careless revision of a logical context (as Spenser's critics have generally assumed)[2] or from an initial failure to make the context logical. In the latter case it is clear that the question of a more primitive and more logical version does not arise; for the flawed version is itself primitive.

The ambiguities demonstrated in my earlier paper may be summarized somewhat as follows: Attempts to use the discrepancies to detect versions of the poem more primitive than the present one are based on the assumption that the poet necessarily thought and worked in terms of logical narrative continuities. It is by no means clear that he did so; indeed, whatever theory we may hold of its evolution, it is obvious that, at some stage of the writing, or compilation, of the poem, he certainly failed to do so. I find no general evidence that this stage was not the initial stage of any particular context which contains a flaw in narrative logic. It is, then, too easily assumed that the poet's primary aim was to tell stories, and hence to tell self-consistent stories; and, while such an aim ought, obviously, to have been achieved, it must be recognized that the notion of it as dominant in Spenser's mind from the first conception of the poem is mere assumption by the critics. For example: When Mrs. Bennett looks for Spenser's beginnings in the story of some hero's quest for the Fairy Queen, or in stories about the knights of Maidenhead—stories the failure of which to develop contributes to the present condition of the poem—she attributes to Spenser a primary interest in narrative continuities which he did not

[1] "The Structure of *The Faerie Queene*," *PMLA*, LXVIII (1953), 1079-1100.

[2] Janet Spens, *Spenser's Faerie Queene* (London, 1934), pp. 15-37; J. H. Walter, "'The Faerie Queene': Alterations and Structure," *MLR*, XXXVI (1941), 37-58; and "Further Notes on the Alterations to the 'Faerie Queene,'" *MLR*, XXXVIII (1943), 1-10; Josephine Waters Bennett, *The Evolution of "The Faerie Queene"* (Chicago, 1942), *passim*. See my discussion, *PMLA*, LXVIII, 1082-1086.

necessarily have.[3] The same interest is assumed when the narrative discrepancies are used to discover "earlier," and self-consistent, forms of the stories in which they occur.

To understand better how Spenser could perpetrate gross blunders in narrative logic, we must look for a literary purpose which overrides the aim of telling self-consistent stories. Such a purpose, at least as far as Books I-IV are concerned, may be found, in general, in the imitation of well-defined models (the *Aeneid* in Books I and II, *Orlando Furioso* in Books III and IV);[4] and, in particular, in the imitation of *Orlando Furioso* by a procedure by which narrative logic, though not necessarily excluded, is necessarily relegated to a place of secondary importance. This paper will be concerned to define and illustrate such a procedure.

The poet who decides to write a new narrative poem in a well-defined genre, or in the manner of a poem such as *Orlando Furioso* which has characteristics so strongly marked that it may be regarded as virtually defining a genre, must consider several requirements, some of which may, on occasion, become mutually conflicting. In the first place, he will imitate the narrative method of his model. Secondly, he will use narrative material which is characteristic of his model; a sufficient number of his narrative episodes must so closely resemble episodes in the model that the reader recognizes them as "borrowed" from the model, and can affirm that this or that episode is recognizably "Virgilian" or "Ariostan." Thirdly, he will imitate his model's characteristic devices of style. The satisfying of these three requirements will, on the whole, define the new poem as belonging to a particular genre, or

[3] *Op. cit.*, Chaps. I-IV. The assumption of such an interest can be seen fairly clearly to underlie Mrs. Bennett's remark on Book III: "The completeness with which Spenser has imitated the whole story of Angelica suggests that... he first put together and retold a story which Ariosto had wilfully broken up, and then himself quarried his early narrative for material to incorporate in other stories..." (p. 140). It is hardly obvious that the "completeness" of the imitation is evidence for one or the other method by which Spenser might have worked, especially when we consider the brevity and comparative insignificance of Angelica's story in *Orlando Furioso*. In a later discussion, "Genre, Milieu, and the 'Epic-Romance,'" *English Institute Essays 1951* (New York, 1952), pp. 95-125, Mrs. Bennett appears to abandon this assumption in favor of the view that Spenser's allegorical intention may override the claims of narrative logic—so that Book III, described in 1942 as "hastily concocted" (*Evolution*, pp. 144, 153), can now be seen as "a set piece, like a formal garden" (*EIE 1951*, p. 112). The argument is unconvincing; allegorical intention is not necessarily inconsistent either with logical narrative or with the imitation of an established literary structure. We must therefore look elsewhere for an explanation of the narrative flaws which (as Mrs. Bennett concedes, *EIE 1951*, p. 121) offend the reader, however complete he thinks Spenser's allegorical achievement.

[4] For a definition of the two strata of the poem here implied, see *PMLA*, LXVIII, 1089-1094.

as an imitation of a particular model.[5] Fourthly, the poet will, if he wishes to satisfy the careful reader, maintain narrative logic—a desideratum closely connected with the first and second requirements noted above.

It is generally agreed that Books I and II of *The Faerie Queene* show a considerably better score for narrative logic than do Books III and IV. If we consider the models mentioned above from the point of of view of narrative method, it will be clear that they are such as would assist in producing this state of affairs. For in the epic structure of Virgil, as in Spenser's Books I and II, it is narrative unity, continuity, and logic which are the determining factors of poetic form.[6] In the structure of *Orlando Furioso*, on the other hand, the determining factors are disunity of narrative interest[7] and an artificial imposition of discontinuity; narrative logic is in fact usually preserved in Ariosto, but it is sometimes less conspicuously present than it usually is in Virgil and in Spenser's first two books.[8]

From the point of view of narrative logic and its relation to narrative method, *Orlando Furioso* is, paradoxically, at once harder and easier to imitate than the *Aeneid*: it is harder, because strict narrative logic is, presumably, more difficult to maintain in several interlocked narratives than in one; it is easier, in that failure of narrative logic will tend to escape notice more often in several interlocked narratives than in one. From the second branch of this paradox, it follows that the poet who imitates Ariosto can take risks in narrative logic when it

[5] Nothing is said here of the poet's moral or social purposes. It is hard to agree with Mrs. Bennett that these are relevant "in determining genre" (*EIE 1951*, pp. 112-113). Pope's *Rape of the Lock* and *Dunciad* are recognized, in terms of the three requirements just stated, primarily as epics; their form, narrative episodes, and style would otherwise be pointless, and that Pope's moral purpose is markedly different from Virgil's does not obscure this recognition. Similarly, differences between Ariosto's and Spenser's moral outlooks do not prevent us from regarding *F.Q.*, III and IV, as an imitation of *Orlando Furioso*.

[6] The narrative logic of the *Aeneid* itself is in fact imperfect; see, for instance, M. Marjorie Crump, *The Growth of the Aeneid* (Oxford, 1920), *passim*. But the *Aeneid* probably contains no error so gross as, say, Spenser's reversal of the order of cause and effect in his account of Florimell's wanderings and the overthrow of Marinell (III, i, 15 ff., iv, 12 ff., v, 9-10). The Renaissance idea of the epic as a unified narrative obviously implies that the narrative ought to be logical.

[7] Subject, of course, to the dominating interest of the story of Ruggiero and Bradamante, as in *F.Q.*, III-IV, there is a dominating interest in the story of Artegall and Britomart.

[8] For instance, in I, 31 Ferraú disappears in search of Orlando's helmet, and reappears in XII, 11 in Atlante's palace, still intent on the same quest (XII, 30-31); his intervening journey is not mentioned. This does not violate, but it also does not emphasize, narrative logic; we should like to know how Ferraú got from one place to the other, or at least to be told that he did. An actual error, of the Spenserian kind, is to be found in *O.F.*, XL, 73, where certain persons, said earlier (XVI, 48, 81; XVIII, 45) to have been killed, now appear to be alive. Ariosto revised most of this away in the errata of 1521, but it remains in the text of 1532 and hence in most modern editions; see the edition of N. Zingarelli (3rd ed., Milan, 1944), p. lxxii.

suits his purpose, hoping (even if he sees the resulting errors himself) that they will escape notice; yet at the same time he may remain confident that his primary aim of producing a recognizable imitation of his model will be achieved. For Ariosto's narrative method is so strongly characteristic of *Orlando Furioso* that it suffices for the recognition of the poetic form (though obviously not for the complete satisfaction of the careful reader) if, in the imitation, the typically Ariostan process of handling discontinuously a multitude of narratives is clearly visible; recognition of the logic of any individual narrative thread is not in the first instance necessary. The impression of imitation will be confirmed by the use of Ariostan subject matter and devices of style; and, accordingly, the three elements of the Ariostan manner appear in Books III and IV of *The Faerie Queene*.[9] In what follows we shall be concerned with Spenser's use of Ariosto's subject matter.

In his handling of subject matter, three courses are open to the imitator. He may adopt both the narrative logic and the episodes of his model; but he cannot follow the model's logic in any but the broadest outlines, for to follow it in every detail would be merely to rewrite, not to imitate, the model. The imitator will thus more often be forced towards a second procedure, which is to ignore the logic of the model and to devise a new narrative continuity. He will now face the probability that the episodes of his model will not agree with the logic of his new narrative continuity; but, if he attempts to alter the episodes so that the logic is maintained, he will incur the risk that they may cease to be recognizable as derived from the model, and the impression of imitation may be destroyed. The degree of risk depends at least partly on the model in use; that failure is not inevitable is obvious from the numerous epic structures stemming from Virgil. But the risk is peculiarly greater in a poem modelled on *Orlando Furioso*. There are many epics, and hence many treatments of stock epic situations; hence the stock epic situation may be defined in the broadest terms and still remain recognizable: the epic opening, narration, prophecy, catalogue, descent to the underworld, and the like. The epic situation has had

[9] Spenser's use of Arisoto's narrative method is glanced at in R. E. Neil Dodge, "Spenser's Imitations from Ariosto," *PMLA*, XII (1897), 151-204, especially pp. 192-193. On Spenser's use of Ariostan subject matter, see Dodge's paper *passim*, and his "Spenser's Imitations from Ariosto—Addenda," *PMLA*, XXXV (1920), 91-92; A. H. Gilbert, "Spenser's Imitations from Ariosto: Supplementary," *PMLA*, XXXIV (1919), 225-232; W. J. B. Owen, "Spenser and Ariosto," *N & Q*, CXCIV (1949), 316-318. On his use of Ariostan devices of style, see Professor Gilbert's paper just cited, and W. J. B. Owen, "*Orlando Furioso* and Stanza-Connection in *The Faerie Queene*," *MLN*, LXVII (1952), 5-8. In her attempt to show that Books III and IV are not intended as Ariostan imitations (*EIE 1951*, pp. 109 ff; see note 3 above), Mrs. Bennett ignores Spenser's use of Ariosto's tricks of style. But with what allegorical purpose such devices were borrowed by Spenser, and even introduced into contexts not borrowed from Ariosto (see *MLN*, LXVII, 8), or with what object he used them, other than to suggest imitation of *Orlando Furioso*, it is difficult to see.

rubbed off it, by repeated use, the details which define it as specifically Homeric or Virgilian. Because of such lack of detail, the epic situation is flexible, and readily adaptable to very various logics; so Spenser uses it in Books I and II. *Orlando Furioso*, on the other hand, is unique; there are no stock Ariostan episodes, only individual ones, whose individualities must be reproduced by the imitator if they are to be recognized. The Ariostan episode is thus inflexible, rooted in the narrative logic of *Orlando Furioso*, and usually intolerant of modification. The imitator thus faces this paradox: he must ignore Ariosto's logic if he is not merely to rewrite *Orlando Furioso*; yet, by modifying Ariosto's episodes in order to maintain a new logic, he risks sacrificing the impression of imitation which would be achieved by using episodes distinctively Ariostan.

A third procedure remains available, involving another paradox: the imitator may ignore Ariosto's logic and retain Ariosto's episodes virtually unaltered, and by so doing he will retain the impression of imitation of subject matter; but he will probably adopt this procedure at the cost of damaging the logic of his new narrative continuity—a failure which, as we saw earlier, may tend to be concealed by the characteristic Ariostan narrative method.

Spenser appears to adopt all three procedures in *The Faerie Queene*. As an example of the first, we may observe the general outlines of his story of Britomart, which (as far as the story goes) follow the general outlines of Ariosto's story of Bradamante: an ideal husband is sought by an ideal wife; they meet; duty calls the hero away; a misunderstanding arises but is resolved; they part again. In these general outlines there is no failure of narrative logic; the general movement of Spenser's story follows that of Ariosto's; and, from this point of view, Books III, IV, and the relevant part of V are a successful imitation of *Orlando Furioso*. The second procedure may be exemplified by the episode of Merlin (*F.Q.*, III, iii; *O.F.*, III), which is altered by Spenser so that it fits logically enough into the story of Britomart and yet remains recognizably derived from Ariosto's episode.[10] The third procedure, with which this paper is primarily concerned, can be illustrated more strikingly and at greater length.

We shall consider first Spenser's use of Ariostan material in the story of Ate (IV, i and iv). In i, 17 Ate and Duessa "in face And out-

[10] At least two factors inherent in the episode contribute to Spenser's success: the use of a traditional figure whose mere name points immediately to the relation between Ariosto's and Spenser's episodes; and the mere mass of the prophecy, which functions similarly by drawing attention to itself, in each poem, as a considerable body of writing, on a particular theme, and lacking in narrative value. Compare with this the use of *O.F.*, XIII, 26 ff. in *F.Q.*, I, vi, 3 ff.; narrative logic is well maintained, the alteration is small (Ariosto's outlaws become Spenser's satyrs), but Spenser's episode, perhaps because it is comparatively slight, is less easily recognized as Ariostan than is *F.Q.*, III, iii.

ward shew faire semblance... did beare"; and, although (Duessa's and) Ate's evil qualities "mote to none but to the warie wise appeare," it is stated in i,18 that "such as she was, [Ate] plaine did shew"—a conception which is maintained for the rest of Spenser's portrait of her. In this inconsistent portrait three Ariostan sources appear to be involved. The disguised Ate of i,17, as I have suggested elsewhere, is probably based on Ariosto's disguised Fraud (*O.F.*, XIV, 87).[11] The more detailed description of Ate undisguised and of her usual dwelling (i, 19-29) is probably, as Dodge suggested, from the *Cinque Canti*, I, 38 ff.[12] The third, and the major, notion in Spenser's Ate is that of Ariosto's Gabrina; this is the Ate of i, 47 ff. (the taunting of Scudamour with the alleged infidelity of Amoret), based on *OF.*, XX, 134 ff. (the taunting of Zerbino with the alleged infidelity of Isabella); it is also the Ate of iv, 9 ff. (the proposed joust in which the loser is to take over the hag Ate), based on *O.F.*, XX, 119 ff. (the joust between Marphisa and Zerbino by which Zerbino is forced to take over the hag Gabrina). The point of connection in Spenser's mind was presumably that all three conceptions involve a hag, and two (the first and the third) a hag in fine clothes.[13]

Of the three Spenserian passages, the second lies outside the course of the narrative and its logic; the major discrepancy appears between i, 17, on the one hand, and, on the other, i, 47 ff. and iv, 9 ff., where Spenser, drawing directly on the one character in *Orlando Furioso*, proceeds without difficulty. Several theories might be advanced to account for the failure of logic; they would be, in effect, theories of order of composition. Thus, if we assume seriatim composition, we may argue that Spenser began at i, 17 with one Ariostan notion of Ate, led himself astray with a second which introduces the notion of an undisguised Ate (i, 18-31), and proceeded with a third which happens to be more or less congruous with the second.[14] Or we may assume that i,17 is later than the following matter, and that it has been carelessly inserted without regard to the two ensuing conceptions of Ate; or, again, that the description in i, 17 applied originally to Duessa only, and that its extension to Ate is a late blunder. No such theories can be proved. They involve one essential fact, that Spenser blundered in an attempt to combine three Ariostan conceptions; but the remainder is an embroidery of theorizing about the order of composition which is prompted by the assumption that, at some stage, the narrative must have been logical.

We shall be on safer ground if we confine our attention to the fact.

[11] *N & Q*, CXCIV, 318. The connection in Spenser's mind was perhaps rather between Duessa and Fraud than between Ate and Fraud, but he has made the description in i, 17 apply equally to Duessa and Ate.

[12] *PMLA*, XII, 202.

[13] Gabrina's were acquired from Pinabello's lady, *O.F.*, XX, 115-6, just before the encounter with Zerbino which is imitated in iv, 9 ff.

[14] So Dodge more or less implies, *PMLA*, XII, 202.

The failure of logic is most simply accounted for by supposing that Spenser here adopted the third of the imitative procedures outlined above—that he merely extracted i, 47 ff. and iv, 9 ff. from *Orlando Furioso* and placed them in the proximity of another notion of Ate, probably derived from another Ariostan context with which the source of i, 47 ff. and iv, 9 ff. has no connection. From another point of view, we may say that the Ate of iv, 9 ff. (especially, since the episode depends for its meaning on the visible defects of Ate) and of i, 47 ff. (to a smaller degree) had to be like Gabrina, and therefore unlike the disguised Ate of i, 17, if her Ariostan derivation was to be clear to the reader. With such an interpretation of the fact, the order of composition, in any case indeterminable, is seen to be indifferent and indeed irrelevant; for it becomes relevant only on the assumption that in some primitive version of the poem the narrative logic was sound; and for such an assumption there is, as we have seen, no obvious warrant. It may be, indeed, not only that the point of connection between the two Ariostan conceptions, that both involve a hag in fine clothes, was Spenser's hint for the introduction of one or the other conception into his poem, but also that he relied on this tenuous link to ease the course of the narrative logic for the not too exacting reader—a link strengthened, in a sense, by the description, massive though not immediately relevant to the narrative logic, of Ate as a hag in i, 19-31.

It is to be observed further that, while in iv, 9 ff. Ate must be recognizable as a hag for the sake of the narrative logic within that episode, there is no such necessity in i, 47 ff. In this passage Ate could have retained the "faire semblance" of i, 17, and could yet have thrown her taunts at Scudamour without damage to narrative logic. It is thus clear that Scudamour's "Vile hag" (i, 48), though prepared for by i, 19-31, is directly from Zerbino's "vecchia maledetta" (*O.F.*, XX, 141), retained by Spenser to the detriment of narrative logic with respect to i, 17, yet retained as necessary, or at least useful, in defining i, 47 ff. as an Ariostan episode. The retention thus suggests that Spenser was interested less in constructing logical narratives than in appropriating from *Orlando Furioso* episodes, regarded as self-contained entities whose Ariostan derivation should be obvious to the reader, whatever effect the retention of details defining the episode as Ariostan might have on the logic of the narrative continuity into which the poet inserted it.[15] This is the third of the imitative procedures described above.

The suggestion may be supported by a consideration of the more complex episode which ends in the notorious breakdown of logic at I, vi, 48. Satyrane has been led to fight with Sansloy by false information

[15] This paper is not concerned with the rhetorical gain which may possibly result from such a method of imitation. But it may be said in passing that, if the reader can accept, or ignore, the failure of logic, his impression of Ate will probably be enlivened by the realization that she is three Ariostan hags in one.

supplied by Archimago; the duel begins, Una makes off, pursued by Archimago, and the canto ends with an Ariostan tag promising to supply "this battels end" in "another place" which the poem never reaches. The corresponding duel between Rinaldo and Sacripante (*O.F.*, I, 77-II, 19) is broken off without definite result by means of a lying tale concerned with Orlando and inspired by an enchanter; and this, as far as Rinaldo is concerned, has an important reference forward in Ariosto's narrative logic. Spenser, not concerned to follow up this reference, uses the motif of the enchanter as the means of initiating the duel between Satyrane and Sansloy, thereby depriving himself of the motif as a means of breaking it off; whereupon, it is to be suspected, he simply found himself at a loss for material to complete the episode, and endeavored to content himself and the reader with a promise to supply it later. He makes nothing of the other reference forward in *Orlando Furioso*, the magician-friar's pursuit of Angelica, beyond the vague hints in I, vi, 48 of Archimago's pursuit of Una; these may be intended to link with Archimago's appearance in I, xii, but if so the connection is not clear.

It is conceivable that within the narrative logic of Book I Spenser could have used the motif of the enchanter as Ariosto uses it—for instance, by making Archimago say that Una had gone off with the Red Cross Knight. He may have decided not to use it thus either because he had already decided to place it before the duel (when, obviously, he could not use it again to break off the duel); or because he thought it unsuitable as a means of breaking off the duel (when he was free to place it before the duel). Whatever the approach, it is clear that neither his own nor Ariosto's logic compelled him to place it before the duel; the duel could have been initiated, as in *Orlando Furioso*, by the mere meeting of the contestants and a quarrel over Una. Hence there appears in this passage, as in the "Vile hag" of IV, i, 48, a determination on Spenser's part to include in his episode, in one way or another, all the salient details of a well-defined Ariostan episode, without much consideration of the narrative discrepancy resulting from his alteration of Ariosto's order of events; indeed, his attention seems so rigorously concentrated on Ariosto's episode seen in isolation that, once he has exhausted its details, it does not occur to him to finish his own version either by inventing an ending or by borrowing one from elsewhere in *Orlando Furioso*. If, then, we think in terms of a logical narrative continuity in which the episode is a link, it is clear that the motif of the enchanter's story, if it is necessary at all, is necessary after the duel; if we think in terms of writing a recognizable imitation of an Ariostan episode, it is clear that the motif of the enchanter's story must be included, but that it can be included in any position such that it does not clash with the narrative logic within the limits of the episode,

whatever effect a repositioning may have on the logic of the narrative continuity in which the episode occurs.

Other examples of this procedure are sometimes complicated by factors other than the imitation of an Ariostan episode, for instance, the encounter between Guyon and Britomart at the opening of Book III. This is based on the encounter between Sacripante and Bradamante in *O.F.*, I, 59 ff., but a little more fully than has usually been noticed. Apart from the encounter itself, Arthur's consolation of Guyon (III, i, 11) is based on Angelica's of Sacripante (*O.F.*, I, 67); the poet's comment identifying Britomart (III, i, 8) is based on the remarks of the messenger and Ariosto identifying Bradamante (*O.F.*, I, 69-71);[16] the shame of Guyon after his unhorsing (III, i, 7) is based on Sacripante's (*O.F.*, I, 66); and the anger of Guyon after his unhorsing (III, i, 9) is based on Sacripante's before the encounter (*O.F.*, I, 60).

The episode has been criticized as wanting in allegorical and narrative logic, and as involving an inconsistency in the portrayal of Guyon's character.[17] There seems to be no allegorical intention,[18] though from this it does not follow, of course, that the episode has been tampered with—the poem is a "continued allegory" only in the letter to Ralegh. Even so, it ought to be pointed out that there would be a gain in allegorical logic if Spenser had followed more closely Ariosto's episode, where Sacripante meditates an assault on Angelica's virtue but is prevented by the arrival of Bradamante. Britomart (so the argument for "revision" of a primitive and logical version might run) ought to find Guyon, or some more disreputable character for whom Guyon has been substituted, in a similar situation. Yet that this was not Spenser's intention seems to be indicated by the shift in the position of Guyon's anger as compared with Sacripante's; if there was an earlier version, closer to *Orlando Furioso*, which has been tampered with so that the allegorical logic has disappeared, we should not expect Guyon's anger to be mentioned at all, for it should have been removed with the mention of the interrupted assault which motivated the anger. Thus far, then, Spenser's alterations of Ariosto's logic are a rejection of Sacripante's attempt on Angelica, and a retention and repositioning of the anger motivated by the interrupted attempt.

In *Orlando Furioso* the anger of Sacripante motivates the tilt with Bradamante. Thus Spenser's alterations leave the tilt with Britomart without motivation—a major defect in narrative logic. Another defect, according to one critic, is that Britomart "sustains the encounter like a veteran, and not a word is said of her inexperience."[19] This seems

[16] This and the preceding point were noticed by Dodge, *PMLA*, XXXV, 92.

[17] Spens, pp. 18-19; Walter, *MLR*, XXXVI, 41; Bennett, *Evolution*, p. 145.

[18] The conventional explanation, that the outcome represents the reconciliation of Temperance and Chastity (whatever that may mean), is too subtle to be credible.

[19] Bennett, *Evolution*, p. 145.

remote from the point; if she did not sustain it like a veteran, she would be no heroine, and (more important) she would fail to behave like Bradamante, who happens to be, in terms of the sum of *Orlando Innamorato* and *Orlando Furioso*, a veteran. Any mention of Britomart's inexperience, then, would destroy the impression of Ariostan imitation. In any case, Spenser has, consciously or unconsciously, rationalized the narrative by giving Britomart her enchanted spear; Bradamante does not receive hers till much later.[20]

Finally, Guyon's anger, as Miss Spens emphasizes, is out of character. The discrepancy would not arise if there were no mention of the anger, or if the anger were attributed to some more appropriate character than Guyon; for, within the limits of the episode, it is motivated fairly credibly. Thus if Spenser had not tampered with the order of the elements in Ariosto's episode, we should not have seen a flaw in the portrayal of Guyon at this point, for there would have been no anger to disturb us. But, since the episode occurs critically at the junction between the two strata of the poem which have been defined elsewhere,[21] there is, perhaps, ground for suspecting that Guyon (as he is defined in Book II) was not Britomart's original opponent. If this is so, the more immediate cause of the discrepancy is the insertion of Guyon into a context to which he does not belong, and Miss Spens is right in suspecting "patchwork." However this may be, the patchwork has nothing to do with the alteration of Ariosto's order which leaves the tilt unmotivated and which also provides a less immediate cause of the discrepancy in the portrayal of Guyon. That alteration is characteristic of Spenser's method of imitating Ariosto, and is similar in motive and effect to the repositioning of the episode of the enchanter in I, vi.

In Spenser's handling of these three episodes there is perhaps sufficient material to justify a general description of the imitative method which we are considering:

(1) The episode imitated is seen as an isolated entity, and expected logical linkings backward or forward may therefore be absent. Thus the narrative antecedent of IV, i, 48 (IV, i, 17) does not logically justify the Ariostan phrase "Vile hag." In I, vi, the motif which in Ariosto is the forward link is in Spenser (needlessly, in terms of narrative logic) made into the backward link, and no new forward link is provided.

[20] *O.F.*, XXIII, 15 ff. Mrs. Bennett ignores this point. In *F.Q.*, III, ii, 6, Britomart does, in fact, claim long experience "in warlike stowre"; as this seems inconsistent with III, iii, 52 ff., it is, no doubt, intended as a fiction similar to the slander of Artegall in III, ii, 8. Dodge thought it a mistake arising from reminiscence of *Gerusalemme Liberata* (*PMLA*, XII, 196, note). This mistake, if it is one, perhaps arises rather from confusion between two passages in Tasso, II, 39 and VI, 92; see A. H. Gilbert, *On the Composition of "Paradise Lost"* (Chapel Hill, 1947), pp. 166-167.

[21] See note 4 above and *PMLA*, LXVIII, 1096-1097, note 43.

In III, i, Sacripante's meditated assault is omitted,[22] with the consequences described above; Bradamante's hasty departure (*O.F.*, I, 64) is omitted,[23] so that Ariosto's messenger is not needed, and what he says has therefore to be put into the mouth of the poet. Assault and messenger are elements linking backward and forward in the narrative logic of *Orlando Furioso*, which Spenser is not concerned to follow.

(2) On the other hand, as many Ariostan elements as possible are included which do not positively jar with the narrative logic within the limits the episode. Thus in IV, i, 47 ff. Ate is a "Vile hag," an Ariostan description satisfactory to the needs of the episode and to its connection with IV, iv, 9 ff., but unsatisfactory with reference to IV, i, 17. In I, vi the motif of the enchanter and in III, i the motif of the unhorsed knight's anger are retained, though their new positions, satisfactory within the episodes, are not dictated by the logic of the larger narrative continuities in which they stand; on the contrary, the new positions disturb that logic in one way or another. Here too belongs the transfer to Arthur of Angelica's consolatory remarks; this is essentially similar to the points just mentioned, but has escaped comment since it jars neither with the logic of the episode nor with that of the narrative continuity.

(3) Further Ariostan matter may be imported to rationalize the episode or to add to its score for Ariostan elements. Thus in III, i, the enchanted spear, drawn in from elsewhere in *Orlando Furioso*, rationalizes Britomart's success. In I, vi, 48 nothing similar is drawn in except an Ariostan rhetorical tag, which serves as a kind of signature certifying the Ariostan nature of the episode and temporarily lulls the reader's suspicions of narrative failure to come. In IV, i, 47 ff. there is no rationalization, but IV, i, 19-31 has persuaded the reader towards a new conception of Ate.

The method just described is not, as we saw earlier, used by Spenser every time he borrows an episode from *Orlando Furioso*; nor is it offered as an explanation of every narrative discrepancy in the poem. The account is intended rather to illustrate the proposition that imitation of Ariosto by a sufficiently frequent Spenserian procedure is an aim which can override the aim of writing self-consistent stories and which can produce flaws in narrative logic when it does so.

The errors which arise from the use of this procedure are not very different from a kind well known in other sorts of traditional narrative

[22] It may be worth noting that, in the corresponding episode at the beginning of Book II, usually cited as parallel to the present one, Archimago's fiction of Red Cross's assault on Duessa would, if true, represent the situation in *Orlando Furioso* if Sacripante had not been interrupted by Bradamante. Spenser may have taken the hint for Archimago's tale from here.

[23] It is possibly to be recognized in the account of the tilt with Marinell, III, iv, 18.

literature—those resulting from the use, as it were simultaneously, of two or more conflicting sources. Spenser's account of Ate, discussed above, is based on three Ariostan passages sufficiently remote from each other to be regarded as three separate and, at relevant points, conflicting sources. Similarly, difficulties arising from the motivation of Florimell's flight are probably due, in part at least, to contamination of Ariosto's account of Angelica by Tasso's account of Erminia.[24] In such cases, no evidence points toward one or another of the sources as the probable, or certain, "original" and logical version followed by Spenser, and the notion that he produced such a version does not necessarily have any meaning. From a slightly different point of view, such errors are seen to result, in effect, from a failure to follow the (supposedly adequate) narrative logic of a single source. For each of the offending passages in I, vi and III, i we have such a single, logical source in Ariosto, but no other source material, in conflict with *Orlando Furioso*, to which Spenser's errors can be traced. It is clear that in such a case the only "original," self-consistent version with which Spenser's can properly be compared is Ariosto's; any other logical version is bound to be the invention of the critic, and its existence in the development of the poem can never be proved. Thus, while the suggestion made above, that in III, i Guyon was not Britomart's original opponent, possibly has the merit of making the episode a little more logical from the point of view of character, it does so only in a negative way, by removing the Guyon of Book II from the field of discussion. It cannot be shown that the "original" opponent suited the motif of anger any better than Guyon does now, for we have no means of knowing who or what he was; any inference that he fitted the episode better than Guyon is, in fact, a rationalization by the critic for which the poem provides no evidence. Nor does the suggestion help to remove the discrepancy of the unmotivated tilt. This is not surprising, since the suggestion does not arise from the hypothesis that the episode as

[24] See note 6 above. Florimell's journey is motivated, like Erminia's, by a wish to succor a wounded lover (III, v, 9-10; *G.L.*, VI, 66 ff.). The parallels do not seem to have been fully noted: cf. the simile of the hunt, III, iv, 46, and *G.L.*, VII, 2; the time note, III, vii, 2, and *G. L.*, VII, 3 (also *O.F.*, I, 35); the horse's mastery, III, vii, 2, and *G.L.*, VII, 1; the seeking of refuge with a rustic family, III, vii, 5 ff., and *G.L.*, VII, 5 ff. (the beginning of a passage used by Spenser in VI, ix). A motivation of Florimell's journey different from that of Angelica's was called for, since Ariosto's story here depends on its antecedents in Boiardo; but, as would be expected from the drift of this paper, the motivation which Spenser chose to use cannot easily be accommodated to the Ariostan texture of Book III. The conflicting statements about Britomart's experience in arms (III, ii, 6 and iii, 52 ff.) were evidently seen by Dodge (see note 20 above) as a similar contamination of Ariosto by Tasso. But III, iii, 52 ff. is not Ariostan matter, and the discrepancy, if real, arises from conflict between Tasso and Spenser's invention, or between two minor borrowings from Tasso, rather than between Ariosto and Tasso. *O.F.*, XXV, 32, cited by Gilbert, *loc.cit.*, seems too slight to have suggested *F.Q.*, III, ii, 6.

Spenser handled it was necessarily at any time logical, but rather from the consideration that the junction of two such strata of writing as were defined earlier is a likely place for a failure in narrative logic.

From the viewpoints described in the last paragraph, the hypotheses which have been advanced to account for the errors in *The Faerie Queene* are these:

(1) Spenser originally failed to follow Ariosto's logic, but devised a new logic of his own; this he subquently revised away. So, for instance, the assumptions inherent in Mr. Walter's discussion of I, vi, 48 are: Spenser first altered Ariosto's logic in the manner described above; then he devised a new ending for the duel, of which all we can say is that it was presumably as indecisive as that in *Orlando Furioso*, but differently motivated; then he removed this ending during revision.[25]

(2) Spenser originally followed Ariosto's logic and then revised it away. This seems to have been the hypothesis of Mrs. Bennett in her account of Book III.[26]

(3) Spenser's errors result from an initial failure to follow Ariosto's logic—a failure which may or may not be emphasized by the use of conflicting sources. This is the hypothesis which has been advanced in this paper.

It is clear, not only that hypothesis (3) is the simplest of the three, but also that it does not require for its support the additional assumption that Spenser's object was always to produce logical narrative continuities—an assumption which, as we saw above, is in some sense contradicted by the poem, but which is implied by the second stage of hypothesis (1) and by the first stage of hypothesis (2).

In terms of hypothesis (3), then, Spenser's imitation of Ariosto is, positively, the use of Ariosto's narrative method, devices of style, and episodes; negatively, it often involves a primary failure to follow Ariosto's narrative logic, which is sometimes made good by modification of Ariosto's episodes but which sometimes, more strikingly, involves a secondary failure to devise a new narrative logic. This secondary failure is, I believe, the cause of at least some of the narrative discrepancies in *The Faerie Queene*.

The imitative procedure which involves this secondary failure is, perhaps, an attempted solution of the paradoxical difficulty of imitating *Orlando Furioso* which was mentioned earlier in this paper. Spenser imitates those features of Ariosto's manner which most immediately strike the reader; the presence (in *Orlando Furioso*) or absence (from

[25] *MLR*, XXXVI, 37. See my discussion in *PMLA*, LXVIII, 1084.

[26] *Evolution*, p. 143. The book is thought to be made up from "a fairly complete story of Florimell, modeled on that of Angelica, and the beginning of a story of Britomart," which Spenser, it is suggested, "had on hand." It is not clear from Mrs. Bennett's later paper (see note 3 above) that she still holds this view.

The Faerie Queene) of narrative logic is the feature which it is hardest to recognize at first glance. We cannot say with certainty whether Spenser hit upon the method consciously or unconsciously. But it is difficult to believe that he failed to see Ariosto's narrative logic and, therefore, the too frequent collapse of his own; hence we might tend to suppose that the method was used consciously, perhaps as a mere stopgap, to be improved upon, when opportunity permitted,[27] by devising a new narrative logic which would yet contain the episodes imitated or by modifying Ariosto's episodes sufficiently but not excessively;[28] or perhaps Spenser saw it as a method of imitation as adequate as could be devised in the circumstances. Whatever his approach may have been, it would seem that, in cases where narrative logic fails for the reasons suggested in this paper, it is usually quite unsafe to attempt reconstructions of hypothetical, self-consistent, "original" stories—unsafe because, as probably as not, meaningless. On the other hand, comparison of Spenser's stories with the Ariostan sources of his episodes cannot prove that Spenser ever achieved the logic of Ariosto where he now lacks it; yet such a procedure may serve to emphasize the boldness of the experiment which Spenser undertook when he set out to imitate *Orlando Furioso*, and to suggest, in the difficulties which such a comparison reveals, a possibly sufficient reason why the Ariostan stratum of *The Faerie Queene* never developed into a full-scale poem.[29]

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[27] The letter to Ralegh suggests that in 1590 he had in mind a general stiffening of the logic of the poem, but that (as was argued earlier, *MLR*, XLIII, 1948, 240-241, note 7) he foresaw difficulty in Book III. There is, significantly, no hint that the revised logic would be nearer to Ariosto's.

[28] As in the episode of Merlin in III, iii, mentioned earlier in this paper.

[29] See *PMLA*, LXVIII, 1095-1096.

MATILDA HERON'S CAMILLE

MERLE L. PERKINS

NO THOROUGH evaluation has been made of the American versions of Dumas' *La Dame aux camélias*, first played at the Théâtre du Vaudeville, February 2, 1852. Stage annals, Odell's for New York, Sherman's for Chicago, Kendall's for New Orleans, and Gagey's for San Francisco, give the dates on which *Camille*[1] was enacted, the casts of characters, and sometimes the reactions of audiences. They criticize the performances of a great number of actresses who appeared in the role, including Jean Davenport, Laura Keene, Matilda Heron, Clara Morris, and Helen Modjeska. None of the accounts, however, analyze the similarities and differences between the French play and its American counterparts. In the present paper Matilda Heron's text has been selected for such a study. Comparison produces evidence to correct the opinion that she "makes some changes but none that affects Dumas' conception of the piece."[2] The success of her version was due in large part to her own originality as an adapter and interpreter. To a great extent she created the role of Camille she was to play.

Miss Heron was one of the most popular Camilles this country has known. After seeing Mme Doche play Marguerite Gautier in Paris during 1855, she translated the play and on her return to the United States presented it to American audiences. She first appeared at the Walnut Street Theater, Philadelphia, October 3, the same year. A few weeks later she drew large crowds with *Camille* at St. Louis. In New Orleans, she performed before packed houses two weeks after the theater was supposed to close. Her biggest triumph came in New York City at Wallack's Theater, January 22, 1857. Next day's *Tribune* reflected current opinion: "Miss Heron may be pronounced a great artist. Her depth of expression sometimes surpasses Rachel in feminine intensity of love." She continued to enact the role in New York theaters. In 1859, she was welcomed as Camille at McVicker's Theater in Chicago; she returned to Chicago again in 1862. Her adaptation was seen in most of the important cities of the country. By September 1864, when she ended a long engagement at Niblo's Garden, she had

[1] For a discussion of the title *Camille* under which most versions of the play appeared in America, see A. E. Zucker and P. de F. Henderson, "*Camille* as the Translation of *La Dame aux Camélias*," *MLN*, XLIX (1934), 472-476.

[2] Ralph H. Ware, *American Adaptations of French Plays* (Philadelphia, 1930), pp. 41-42.

played the part an estimated one thousand times, seven months every year for seven years.[3]

This run is in no way attributable to the quality of the translation. Very little of Dumas' art remained after her onslaught. She knew few idioms and seized upon superficial resemblances. Often she did no more than substitute an (often inaccurate) English word for a French word. Varville and Armand gamble; the latter wins, and Varville "must pay for the champagne."[4] The French reads that it is Varville "qui payera la campagne de M. Duval."[5] After the game, Olympe says to Armand, "You have been ill-humored all the night," a line meant to translate "tu as une rude veine, toi." Armand answers: "It is over now, for I have won the game." The French is "Ah, tu me tutoies quand je regagne." At other times Miss Heron did not try to follow the spirit of the French, and replaced speech which was simple and appropriate to a situation by mawkish language hard to imagine on the lips of a courtesan. In Act I, Scene x, Marguerite doubts that Armand can be happy with her: "Aimez une autre femme, ou mariez-vous. Vous voyez que je suis une bonne fille, et que je vous parle franchement." This becomes: "Choose from a holier sphere than this the woman you would love. Then seal that love upon the altar. Take her to your bosom fresh with a parent's blessing . . ." (p. 14).

Much of the novelty and interest in *La Dame aux camélias* lay in the milieu. In this respect, too, Miss Heron weakened the original. She deliberately avoided Dumas' careful representation. Saint-Gaudens, a caricature of the old roué, had been a hit with Parisian audiences. In Act I, Scene vii, he describes his affair with Amanda: "J'étais l'amant de cœur. C'était charmant, mais il fallait se cacher dans les armoires, rôder dans les escaliers, attendre dans la rue." The translation omits the role entirely. The place of Act V, Scene i is Marguerite's room. The curtains are half-drawn. She is asleep on her bed. Gaston is stretched out on a sofa. It is seven in the morning. Gaston had arrived at eleven the evening before and, since she was sick, had stayed to care for her during the night. In the Heron account, the scene becomes strait-laced. Camille is asleep on a couch. Gaston is napping in a chair. It is eight in the morning. Gaston had danced all night and reached the apartment at six that morning. Many concessions of this sort had to be made to audiences squeamish about the subject of the play. Critics

[3] *History of Camille as Performed by Matilda Heron for Over One Thousand Nights* (Cincinnati, 1864). This is a reprint in pamphlet form by Wrightson and Co. of an article which originally appeared in the *Missouri Republican* of St. Louis. Copy in California State Library, Sacramento.

[4] Matilda Heron, *Camille* (Chicago: Dramatic Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 40. This text follows in all respects the original Cincinnati 1856 edition, and has been used here.

[5] Alexandre Dumas fils, *La Dame aux camélias*, ed. D. Giraud, 8th ed. (Paris, n.d.), Act IV, Scene iii.

complained of the "vulgarity of the earlier scenes," even though Miss Heron only hinted at the environment and expurgated passages where Dumas had called a spade a spade.

However, in spite of the errors, sentimental tone, and loss of Dumas' concern with milieu, Miss Heron's version does have positive characteristics which explain its popularity. Her innovations, affecting heroine, thesis, and plot fundamentally change Dumas' conception. His Marguerite is a prostitute by inclination and her own action. She met the Duke and his daughter one summer and became their friend. After the daughter's death, she promised the Duke she would change her ways and become more like his daughter, but on returning to Paris, "se garda bien de tenir parole" (I, iii). She knows sordidness: "Dès que nous ne pouvons plus servir au plaisir ou à la vanité de personne, on nous abandonne, et les longues soirées succèdent aux long jours" (I, x). Since her condition is unequivocal, the thesis can be forcefully presented without any hedging. Dumas states the issues squarely and draws the logical conclusion: a courtesan, no matter how capable she may be of a regenerating love, cannot be rehabilitated. In the words of Marguerite, "Dieu lui pardonnera peut-être, mais le monde sera inflexible" (III, iv). She herself gives the case for severity: "Regarde donc la fange de ton passé; quel homme voudrait t'appeler sa femme; quel enfant voudrait t'appeler sa mère?" The action unfolds within the moral framework furnished by principal character and thesis. It arises from an important decision by Marguerite and progresses as a result of intrigue by Father Duval to self-sacrifice, discovery, and reversal. From a courtesan's point of view Marguerite uses poor judgment when she decides to yield to her love for Armand. She is instinctively afraid: "Un amour sérieux pour moi serait probablement un malheur" (II, v). But she is held by "ce mal imprévu" and gives up her previous associations. This move toward respectability is not enough to satisfy M. Duval, who insists that she leave Armand. Her departure, Armand's discovery of it, his helplessness, produce an effect bordering on terror. At the end of the fourth act, Armand publicly insults Marguerite. Repudiation by the person on whom she had based her hope for a new life represents a complete reversal. Emotional disturbance aggravates her sickness. Later, Armand by her side, she is cheerful before death. The audience can sympathize with her and feel admiration for the courage and love which have lifted her through struggle to a state of serenity. The response is caused by Marguerite's status, the sure logic of the thesis, and the inevitable forward movement of the action.

The Heron play has a very different heroine, introduces no obvious message, and gains strength from its picture of emotional conflict rather than from the action. Camille is unwillingly a member of the demimonde. During the Duke's absence "her story reached the circle in which she

moved . . . she was shunned . . . they told her to go back to Paris . . ." (p. 5). She insists that she is not responsible: "That I am not where he [the Duke] would place me was the fault of those who drove me from it" (p. 18). She describes herself with pride and self-righteousness as "a woman of the world—friendless, fearless—loved by those whose vanity she gratifies—despised by those who ought to pity her" (p. 12). Since she is a courtesan only in name, she refuses to accept her fate as just. Armand's father does not approve or defend the sentence imposed on her by society. No clear-cut thesis, then, can reduce Camille to a social category and define the meaning of the story. Camille is not stoical and self-accusing, like Marguerite, a person destined to help prove a point, but a more heroic creature who is at war with herself, torn between love for Armand, deep personal shame and resentment because of her station, and fear of society: "I know my safety, and will not peril it. Why should I and for what? For jeers, contempt, and scorn?" (p. 24). The development of the play can best be described in terms of this internal struggle. Her decision to seek happiness with Armand is less important for the events it sets in motion than for the hope, unrest, and despair it produces within her. The effect of terror, which at the end of the third act in the original accompanies the discovery of Marguerite's departure, is lost in the translation, because the audience is immediately told by means of a letter that Camille has been forced to turn to Varville. Emphasis is placed on the humiliation and self-sacrifice of Camille rather than on suspense. In both plays, suffering is a strong element in the reversal at the end of the fourth act. In *Camille*, the anguish is accentuated because Armand's insult means the complete frustration of her urge to vindicate herself. In the last scene, Dumas can close the story and the message with precision. Nichette says: "Il te [Marguerite] sera beaucoup pardonné, parce que tu as beaucoup aimé" (p. 105). Miss Heron has no convenient summary. The verse from Luke 7:47 is not used. Repentance and pardon are not appropriate. Camille welcomes death for its release from sorrow. Intensity of emotion, more than moral analysis and a well-ordered plot, has characterized the entire performance. Critics of the day could feel that they had witnessed the suffering of humanity itself and speak of Matilda as an "actress of the passions . . . in their universal ebb and flow" (New York *Tribune*, March 12, 1877).

By stressing suffering, Miss Heron adapted the role to her own personality and manner of acting. The actress of *La Dame aux camélias* had to portray a prostitute convincingly and at the same time arouse pity and admiration for her without offending the audience. Dumas' solution was to make Marguerite "une élégante." He believed Mme Doche ideal for this role, which called for delicacy and restraint: "Il fallait toute la distinction, toute la grâce, toute la fantaisie qu'elle a

montrée sans effort pour que le type difficile et franc de Marguerite fût accepté sans discussion" (Dumas, Préface, p. 5). Miss Heron lacked these qualities. She was attractive in her own way when, just under twenty-five, she first appeared as Camille. Thin and angular, she was saved from plainness by flashing dark eyes which animated a pale, severe, somewhat masculine face. But contemporaries spoke most often of her "magnetism and fire," "strong, energetic nature," "the electricity of her personality," which created in spectators a "wrenching and tightening of the emotions." She was a "wild, impulsive, eccentric being," capable of intense emotion and able to express it by eyes which could "startle and thrill" and by a voice which, usually well modulated, was able to break, become harsh, or affect a crying tone. "Naturalness" was the word most often used in describing acting which today would seem overdone. She was "terrible in her lifelikeness," sometimes "offensive." Her coughing and tortured look during the last act were "too painfully real." Notations made in an acting copy enable us to visualize this style:

> Closer, closer, Armand, and listen while I speak. (Gurgle, choke and get husky) Armand, take this. (Hand him a little locket portrait) I had it taken for you long ago. You will gaze on it often and think of me. (Draw his head down to my breast, and caress his hair). And if some day a lovely, pure, chaste girl should seek your love—(Clasp his hands as he makes a deprecatory gesture, and kiss them. Speak slowly)—I ask you in my name to listen to her kindly, and let her lay her heart on the shrine that once was mine. (Fall back, cover the face, and weep hysterically. Then wipe the eyes, become composed, and encircle his neck with arms) And if she asks you whose portrait this is—tell her. (Outbreak of sobs) Say it was a young friend who loved you well. (Look fondly in his eyes) Who, from her peaceful home beyond the skies keeps vigil with the stars, shedding her smiles upon you both below. (Smile) If this silent image cost her one pang, bury it in my grave without remorse, without fear. (Collapse—almost inaudible) But I can smile, for I am happy. (Look around, dazed) O, how strange! All pain is gone. (Run the hands rapidly down the sides—press the temples, stare at the others, and attempt to rise) Is this life? Now everything appears to change. (Stand up) O, how beautiful! (Gently push his hands away) Do not wake me. I am so sleepy. (Fall, and die).[6]

Her mood was contagious. Women sobbed and cried, and men were not ashamed to weep. One heavy-handed enthusiast, in the New York *Herald*, for January 23, 1857, compared her Camille to a "high pressure, first-class Western steamboat, with all her fires up, extra weight on the safety valve, and not less than forty pounds of steam to the square inch." Although he thought the effect was "fine," "the danger of explosion," he admitted, was "imminent." The critic William Winters provided insight with regard to the motivation when he said

[6] From an undated clipping from an unnamed newspaper, published shortly after Matilda Heron's death, which is pasted in a copy of Samuel French's pirated New York edition of her *Camille* preserved in the California State Library, Sacramento.

her *Camille* "afforded the agonized and agonizing situation which alone could serve for the utterance of her tempestuous nature" (New York *Tribune*, March 17, 1877). In fact, for over a decade, so closely were actress and heroine associated by most theatergoers, that Matilda Heron was Camille. Later stars, including Agnes Ethel and Clara Morris, were strongly influenced by her interpretation. Not until Sarah Bernhardt's tour was the role presented more forcefully to the American public.

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MR. WIMSATT ON THE THEORY OF LITERATURE

ELISEO VIVAS

I

THE PUBLICATION, in revised form, of a selection of seventeen of W. K. Wimsatt's essays invites a provisional, mid-career assessment of his contribution. This is the task that, in view of the subtitle of the book, I had agreed to undertake when I accepted the editor's invitation to review *The Verbal Icon*[1] for this journal. True, I had read with pleasure his two brilliant books on Johnson and I knew he worked in areas beyond my professional competence. But I had taken it for granted that the greatest part of his work was on fields in which I had some knowledge. I was acquainted with several of Wimsatt's essays on theory of literature, a subject on which, I hope, I am not altogether ignorant; and I thought I could handle his critical essays, since practical criticism is a subject in which I occasionally dabble.

But in this I was not altogether right. In the narrow sense the term "criticism" has acquired as a result of developments in the last decades in the United States and to some extent in England, Wimsatt has written very little criticism. This is, of course, not said in either praise or blame, but merely to explain why I was not able to carry out my original intention. Very few, two or at most three, of the essays in *The Verbal Icon* are devoted to practical criticism. And, when Wimsatt turns to criticism, he does not undertake what today is considered the job of the critic: analysis of the informing aesthetic structures of poems (using the term in its widest acceptation), or estimates of their place in an order of rank, or elucidation of their meanings. When Wimsatt writes criticism he may write on "The Structure of Romantic Nature Imagery," but he is more apt to write on the relations of concrete and abstract language to excellence of style, or on the relation of rhyme to meaning, or on the problem of "elegant variation," or on what he calls, for reasons that are not satisfactory to the student of philosophy, the "logical" and the "counterlogical" aspects of style.[2] Since I am not com-

[1] W. K. Wimsatt, Jr., *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry*. With two preliminary essays written in collaboration with Monroe C. Beardsley (Lexington, Ky., 1954).

[2] The student of philosophy is moved to protest against the use to which literary men put philosophical terms that have a fixed acceptation, like "logic" and "connotation"—although Wimsatt uses the latter correctly. I am thinking of men like Ransom and others as well as of our author. Now the notion that style as such, which is to say, as distinct from substance, can be logical, or illogical, or alogical, or counterlogical, raises questions of aesthetics and of theory of meaning that the student of rhetoric, with his tools, is impotent to resolve. It would be desirable to substantiate this claim, but this cannot be attempted within the scope of a review-article.

petent to comment on those of Wimsatt's essays that take up problems of rhetoric, and since a number of the essays in the book take up aspects of the theory of literature, I shall confine my attention to those essays among the latter that seem to me to be the most interesting and important. I would not conceal the fact that my choice is subjective.

But before turning to the task I beg leave to make two prefatory remarks. By means of the first I would express my respect for the author. The reputation he enjoys among the traditional or regular scholars and the untraditional critics is well deserved. If in this review I dwell on my disagreements with Wimsatt, and if I give evidence that I sometimes find his habits of thought uncongenial and his mode of approach to literature alien to me, I beg the reader to bear in mind that I hold that the highest compliment I can pay a thinker is to put my best effort into taking him seriously. But I cannot take him seriously unless I hold him responsible for what he says.

My second prefatory remarks probably goes without saying, but there is no harm in making it explicit. Classification in the area of theory of literature is anything but scientific. Terms have no fixed acceptation and the subject does not have natural joints. Some of the essays I am classifying as dealing with questions on rhetoric can be distinguished only artificially from the problems I shall examine under the heading of theory of literature. Thus, the essay on "Verbal Style" can be classified under the former heading rather than under the latter only by fiat; properly speaking, it falls under both headings. Wimsatt undertakes in it "to correlate areas which have been noticed separately by earlier criticism" (p. 201); but, while starting with rhetorical problems, he ends by transcending the limits within which the mere grammarian would tend to confine his inquiry and is led to face the difficult theoretical question indicated by the title of the book.

How then, one may ask, did Wimsatt acquire his reputation as a critic? The answer is not far to seek. He acquired it when, with Monroe C. Beardsley, he gave contemporary criticism two useful verbal bazookas, effective against the armor of the scholars with whom the critics had been feuding. I refer of course to "The Intentional Fallacy" and "The Affective Fallacy." In labeling these two modes of approach to poetry "fallacies," Wimsatt (for in the following discussion I shall refer to the collaborators, for short, by the name of the senior member) was following contemporary fashion. Authorized by the fashion itself, I suggest we call the fashion "the taxonomic fallacy," or the act of damning by calling "fallacy" any practice or mode of approach to intellectual problems one disapproves of. We shall see below the alleged fallacies baptized by Wimsatt were not genuine fallacies, nor even heresies in respect to some implied aesthetic orthodoxy, but, rather, confusions shared by both parties to the quarrel. Here, for the sake of the historical record, it ought to be pointed out that the first of the two essays ap-

peared in 1946, after it had become fully clear that interest in the intention of the author derailed the critic from his objective—if the intention is sought for outside the poem, and if the objective is to explore the meaning and structural devices which constitute the poem. But notice that the argument is based on two assumptions that may be rejected. If our voyager, like Amerigo Vespucci, came to name a continent that others discovered, it must have been an oversight on his part that acknowledgment was not made. In any case, it is merely an act of justice to give Wimsatt the credit he deserves because of the usefulness of his verbal act. By naming the mode of approach that he opposed, he fulfilled a genuine need. Without labels objects tend to lack phenomenological identity. For his contribution Wimsatt was given recognition as critic. Since then his labor in the field of practical criticism, in the sense of the word indicated above, has been small in terms of quantity, but its quality is high and it demands respectful attention.

II

In the essay on "The Intentional Fallacy" Wimsatt was interested in rescuing the poem, so to speak, from critics who confused it with the poet's biography. He insisted correctly that a poem is an objective linguistic structure, and that we discover its meaning "through the semantics and syntax of a poem, through our habitual knowledge of the language, through grammars, dictionaries, and all the literature which is the source of dictionaries, in general through all that makes a language and culture" (p. 10). On this ground he insisted that the author's intention cannot be the standard by which the poem is judged, since it is by reference to the poem that we find out what the poet is trying to do. This is literally true, although, as we shall see below, a poem is not objective in an unqualified sense, and although the argument is controlled by a verbal intransigence that forbids the opponent flexibility of expression, and denies him the right to telescope his thought for the sake of elegance.[3] For a poem is more or less perfect, and as it reaches its

[3] Wimsatt's verbal intransigence has led him into the one error he made in his brilliant and, to my mind, unanswerable attack on the Chicago critics. He tells us that the Chicagoans speak of a poem as an object or thing, an artificial thing. Wimsatt finds this "very curious," because "if anything about poetry is clear at all, it is that a poem it not really a thing, like a mountain or house but only *analogically* so." A few lines down, "the thing" is transformed by our critic into "a solid 'thing'" and later on the Chicagoans' "attempt to criticize poetry by 'species'" is traced to their "interest in objects or things" (pp. 50 and 53). I agree with Wimsatt that one of the most defective aspects of the Chicagoans' doctrine is their use of species. But I submit that it is perfectly current, and therefore good, usage in philosophy to employ the words "thing" and "object" not only for solid things but also for events, actions, delimitations in the realm of consciousness and all other discriminable elements or aspects, all the "thises" and "thats" which are the subject of discourse. A poem is as properly called a thing as a mountain. Since it is good usage, it is not astonishing to find Wimsatt himself using the word "thing" in the very way in which the Chicagoans use it. "No amount of deference paid to

maximum of perfection it comes more and more closely to fulfill the ideal intention of the poet, so that, in the case of poems approaching perfection, or of those aspects of more or less imperfect poems which come close to perfection, there is no reason why we should not speak of the intention of the poet or of the poem indifferently. But in all strictness our critic was right. However, in the next sentence we see him getting into difficulty. He writes: "and if the poet did not succeed, then the poem is not adequate evidence, and the critic must go outside the poem —for evidence of an intention that did not become effective in the poem" (p. 4).

In a superficial sense this seems unobjectionable. But where, one asks, do we go for the intention we seek? A fully developed answer is the subject for a long essay. All I can offer here is a mere suggestion, in order to make clear my criticism of Wimsatt's essay.

A poem's artistic intention is discovered *in* the poem and not outside of it, by attention to its defects or excellences, which to the critic suggest the informed substance the poem realized or should have realized. It is at this point that the critic may be misled by those who offer him species defined prior to the creation of the poem he is trying to judge, or rules inferred from the practice of other poets. For such devices deny the element of novelty that is the result of the creative power of the poet. A better alternative would seem to be to fall back on a conception of tradition and individual talent; but this theory does not tell the critic how he can discover the poem's intention, although it does lay down the conditions of that discovery. The way out, if way it be, is for the critic to make a leap, using as springboard suggestions offered him by the poem's immanent intention whether realized or not fully realized by it. There is, as philosophers like Scheler and Nicolai Hartmann have pointed out to our generation (for the insight comes from Plato), an a priori element in all value judgment. But this factor properly conceived is not a fully explicit standard by which the critic judges. For him it manifests itself as a disturbing sense that he is confronted by a failure and a more or less explicit conception of the actualization the failure fell short of, or a congruence between the ideal intention and the poem before him. The critic is here in the realm of intuition, of guesses that may be brilliant or stupid, in deep water far from the safe shore of the already discovered.

But could not the critic acknowledge that the poet realized satisfactorily what seems to have been his intention as gathered from the poem, but that the intention was not worth realizing? In such cases the cri-

history," he writes, "can escape the fact that every explanation of a word is in the end an appeal to things, or the companion fact that old documents are mediated in the direction of things by new documents" (p. 255). Since not all the words in historical documents refer to solid things, since some of them refer to speeches, others to poems, others to actions, and some to dreams, Wimsatt is correctly using the word "thing" in the very way in which the Chicagoans use it.

terion is not gathered from the poem but from some outside source. At this point our problem becomes extremely complicated and I cannot explore it here. Succinctly put, a critic who repudiates the objective intention of a work of art may be doing at least one of two things: he may be judging the poem by inapplicable criteria, as when traditional critics accused D. H. Lawrence of lacking form, or when academicians jeered at Cézanne; or he may be making what is in fact a complex moral-aesthetic judgment, not a purely aesthetic one, for in effect he is saying that the poet should not have spent his time or energy in doing what he did—a moral judgment—because, however well done, it has low value in an order of aesthetic rank. This order is unquestionably conceived by the critic as external and prior to the work of art. And the question of its provenance and the validity of its use as a standard is one of the most difficult problems the theorist has to face.

If the preceding observations hold, it follows that there is an intimate relationship between the intention of the poem, as gathered from it, and that of the poet, although not necessarily that which he formulates in an introduction to his work or in his autobiography or letters. The reason for the relationship is obvious. A poem is a telic affair, it does not come about by chance, nor does it make itself. What then but verbal intransigence prohibits us from saying that what the poem intends is what the poet intended and did or did not succeed in making?

I have said enough to show that, if "The Intentional Fallacy" failed to convince intentionalists like Coomaraswamy, the reason was that they had grasped an important truth that they obscurely felt the anti-intentionalist position virtually overlooked. They did not see it clearly and did not state it in a manner that could compel acknowledgment. Nor was Wimsatt totally unaware of it. He tells us that "A poem does not come into existence by accident" (p. 4). But he gives no evidence of a clear grasp of the consequences for his position of the admission he makes. His failure commits him to consequences he cannot maintain; for the poem cannot both be a telic affair and be unrelated to a mind that intended it. Wimsatt quotes Professor Stoll in agreement: The words of a poem come out of a head not out of a hat. I think so too.

In addition to these confusions, the anti-intentionalist position carries with it unfortunate consequences of another type. Calling the confusions of the intentionalist a fallacy tends to fence until now unfenced domains —or to justify fences already erected. In either case it intensifies bad feelings between scholars who ought to be able to cooperate and may even deprive the critic of the help of the historian and the psychologist. But the psychologist often throws light on the density of meaning a poetic image carries; and the historian's help is needed by the critic in order to discriminate the aesthetic structures and the meanings that are the substance of poetry.

There is no need to examine at the same length the second essay pro-

duced by Wimsatt and Beardsley three years after the first. Suffice it to say that Wimsatt (again for short) did not sufficiently consider the questions that arise from the fact that a poem does not exist by itself, in the manner that the glasses with which the critic reads it do. The critic is interested in an object of culture, a phenomenal object that exists in some sense in relation to its readers. The sense in which it does has to be defined with care if the question of the relation of the reactions of the reader to the poem are to be discussed with a modicum of clarity. For poetry as an object of culture does not have status in being in the realm from which Plato's ideas occasionally emigrate to our vale of tears. A poem exists in time and, in a manner of speaking, in space, for it exists as a result of a transaction between a printed page and a reader. To deny without qualification that there is a relationship between the psychological reactions by means of which the reader grasps the poem and the poem itself is to ask him to talk about a poem he has neither heard nor seen. It is true that neither the poem nor its qualities are the reactions it produces—least of all are they the emotions it arouses, nor the therapeutic organization of hypothetical impulses it may bring about. A poem of Sappho still utterly lost in the sands of Oxyrhyncus and of which we do not have any record whatsoever does not *exist* in the sense that *King Lear* exists for the readers of this journal, even though God knows the exact spot in which it is buried. The question as to whether the values revealed symbolically in a poem have status in being independently of their embodiment in it is not one with which we need to concern ourselves. With men like Scheler and Hartmann, and in opposition to the major trend of contemporary American philosophy, I hold that values have status in being—although not *existential* status—independently of our interests in, and knowledge of, them. But the poem we read *exists*—which is to say, has status in time and, in a manner of speaking, in space—and functions as an object of culture, in a phenomenological, and in no other, way. The affectivist errs in identifying the poem with the subjective processes by means of which the reader grasps it; Wimsatt errs when he asserts the objectivity of poetry without regard to the difficulties involved in the assertion. Nor am I suggesting that in a few words in this paragraph I have solved the problem.

III

Theory of criticism, as I use the term, is that area lying between aesthetics proper and practical criticism. Some of its practitioners feel a tension between aesthetics and their own interest. This tension is felt by Wimsatt and it has been felt by Blackmur and Crane.[4] But the tension

[4] Wimsatt: "The role which I have undertaken in this essay is that of defending the domain of poetry and poetics from the encircling (if friendly) arm of the general aesthetician" (p. 221). Also, R. P. Blackmur, "A Burden for Critics," in *Hudson Review*, I, 181; and R. S. Crane, *The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry* (Toronto, 1953), pp. ix-xv.

generates an attitude towards aesthetics that has the consequence of making the literary theorist careless about the foundations of his doctrines. This is the case, I fear, with Wimsatt. I do not mean to retract what I said above about the quality of his work. A man may be strong in analysis yet indifferent to systemic exigencies. The defects of Wimsatt's theory can be traced to what he acknowledges as his "syncretism" (p. 48). I shall call it eclecticism, for "syncretism" has a strongly dyslogistic flavor. I find it difficult to understand how Wimsatt should be happy in his electicism, particularly when we remember what he wrote in "History and Criticism": "We are bound to have a point of view in literary criticism, and that point of view, though it may have been shaped by tradition, is bound to be our own. Points of view cannot be slipped in and out of our minds like lantern slides" (p. 258). But doesn't this observation hold all the more for a theory of literature? What is eclecticism but the slipping of points of view—with their hidden assumptions, whether they be coherent with one another or not—in and out of our minds? No, it is not that, the eclectic may reply. Eclecticism consists in taking the best of each theory and adding it to the best of other theories, thus having all the truth and none of the errors or defects from which the raided theories suffer. I reply that the lantern-slide figure holds, if not too accurately, since the eclectic overlooks contexts and assumptions which give terms and principles their specific meanings. Truths are what they are in their systemic contexts; outside their contexts they are at best half-truths, which makes them half-errors.

The source of the weakness of the essay on "The Concrete Universal" is to be traced, I believe, to Wimsatt's eclecticism. "The central argument of this essay," Wimsatt tells us, "concerning what I shall call the 'concrete universal,' proceeds from the observation that literary theorists have from early times to the present persisted in making statements which in their contexts seem to mean that a work of literary art is in some peculiar sense a very individual thing or a very universal thing or both. What that paradox can mean, or what important fact behind the paradox has been discerned by such various critics as Aristotle, Plotinus, Hegel, and Ransom, it will be the purpose of this essay to inquire."

The term "concrete universal" comes from Hegel, and we can gather what Hegel meant by it from a short quotation from the Introduction to *The Philosophy of Fine Art*: "The work of art ought not to bring before the imaginative vision a content of its universality as such, but rather this universality in the mode of the individual concreteness and distinctive sensuous particularity."[5] In this notion, therefore, it would appear at first glance, we have a happy solution of Wimsatt's paradox.

[5] I am using the translation of F. P. B. Osmaston (London, 1920), p. 70.

The poem is neither a universal nor a particular, it is both. We have to ask two questions of this seemingly happy solution. Does Hegel's notion help us? This assumes that there is indeed a contradiction. And is there in fact one?

In the Hegelian aesthetics the notion of the concrete universal has a fixed meaning which derives from the important role it plays in defining the nature and function of art. Art embodies the Idea—this is its end. But it embodies it not in its universality but in a sensuous medium—this is its nature, and thus Hegel distinguishes it from science (*Wissenschaft*) and from religion. But sever the notion from its systemic context and assume without careful examination that Aristotle, Plotinus, Cicero, Kant, Coleridge, Bergson, Ransom, and Tate are faced by the same problem, and the notion becomes fluid in meaning. We face three main issues that must be discriminated. Some of the men Wimsatt mentions seem to be confronted by one of Hegel's problems, that of defining art or poetry or verse. It was with the definition of verse, I take it, by contrast with a pretentious, secondhand and not altogether accurate notion of what science undertakes, that Ransom was concerned when he introduced the inept idea of loose logical structure and irrelevant texture. He was not defining the function of verse. Others, and among these Johnson and Reynolds, are concerned with the criteria (as they take it) for deciding the quality of art. Bergson is concerned with both of Hegel's problems, the nature and the function of art, but with the first only incidentally.

Since we cannot examine the doctrines of each of the writers Wimsatt mentions, let me establish my contention in terms of the alleged conflict of Johnson and Reynolds with Bergson; for in our critic's opinion the paradox is best exhibited by these men. But let us first note, in agreement with Wimsatt, that it does not matter what side we take in the millennial quarrel about universals. Whatever view we take, we must grant that, in some sense that the metaphysician has to explain, a thing is a collection of traits or qualities such that any one of its component traits is denotable by a term which can be used to denote identical or similar traits or qualities which are constitutive of other things. Our question then is this: Do Reynolds and Johnson contradict Bergson?

My answer is in the negative and my reasons are the following: In the Preface of 1765 from which Wimsatt quotes, Johnson tells us that Shakespeare's characters are not modified by the customs of particular places, that in the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual, in those of Shakespeare it is commonly a species; and Reynolds in his Third Discourse tells us that to acquire the grand style the apprentice had to learn to go above all singular forms, local custom, particularities, and details of every kind. But neither man can be taken literally. Or rather, we can take him literally but must read him very closely, or he makes no sense. In the passage Wimsatt quotes from Johnson we

can see that Johnson was speaking of Shakespeare's "characters"—by which, I take it, he meant Lear and Antony, and Coriolanus, and the woman who hangs upon the cheek of night like a rich jewel on an Ethiop's ear, and the other, of infinite variety. These characters are individuals, not floating assemblages of universals. But, says Johnson, they are the progeny of common humanity and act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated. This statement seems nonsense to the cultural relativist. And it must be owned that men like Johnson and Reynolds and David Hume arrived at common humanity and general passion without awareness of the problems the relativist poses. But the truth of Johnson's statement is not what concerns us. We must attend to what he meant. And by the statement the author obviously meant that Shakespeare's characters, the individuals named Antony and Lear and Juliet and Cleopatra, were not jerked by unshared ticks and by idiosyncratic spastic twitches of the soul. This is why, at the beginning of the paragraph in which the quoted statement is found, Johnson tells us that Shakespeare is above all writers, at least above all modern writers, the poet of nature. The individual, Macbeth, acted from an ambition a Roman could have understood and used means he might have used; and his Gothic wife was torn by a remorse—if such it was—that could be understood by a woman who wore a powdered wig or wears a Bikini bathing suit.

In the Third Discourse, Reynolds counsels the artist to paint figures that are perfect in their kind if he is to master the grand style. We know what Reynolds thinks of the style of the Dutch. In order to achieve the higher aim the artist is not to represent the individual but the class. But how does the artist represent a class? How does he represent the class of innocent girls? One can paint neither mere abstractions nor Platonic ideas—wisdom, courage, innocence, chastity, honesty. Reynolds could not have asked his hearers to do what no one can do. One represents the class by representing individual figures, but avoiding the particularities that constitute the blemishes or defects of natural objects, and thus correcting nature by herself. In a sense Wimsatt is aware of this when he asks, "If Reynolds' picture 'The Age of Innocence' presents a species or universal, what species does it present?" and reiterates the question at the end of the paragraph by asking, "What in the individual work of art demands that we attribute to it one universal rather than another?" (p. 76). But close as he comes to seeing the work of art is an individual and the figure in it is also an individual, he does not see the importance of this for his interpretation of Reynolds' meaning.

It is necessary, although I shall risk giving the impression of pedantry, to call attention to the word "represent" which is employed by Reynolds himself when he concedes that it is true that the figures of Hercules, the Gladiator, and Apollo, are each perfect in their kind, but still none of them is *the representation* of an individual but of a class.

To represent a class one presents an individual free from idiosyncratic defects—and the phrase, Reynolds would have pointed out, is pleonastic.

This is not all. For, after remarking that there is a symmetry that may belong to deformity, Reynolds advises the artist to become acquainted with the genuine habits of nature as distinguished from those of fashion. This is a formulation in his context of Johnson's reference to the poet of nature and to common humanity, for obviously there is a generic nature as well as a generic human nature. And it is represented by presenting or painting things as they appear above singular forms, local custom, particularities. Whether the theory is ultimately intelligible and whether a talented artist who follows it faithfully can do anything more than produce "literary painting" are questions worth investigating but which do not here concern us, just as we were not concerned to inquire whether Johnson did not too easily disregard the partial truth the cultural relativist presses on us. But whatever weaknesses analysis may reveal in the theory of the men of the eighteenth century, what both Johnson and Reynolds intended was that the individual represents the universal when the individual object is subject to certain idealization and the character is allowed to act according to what the writers took to be the laws of nature.

I have labored this point because it is the only way in which I can make clear to the reader that, as I read them, Johnson and Reynolds were talking about *the content* of works of art, about what Bradley calls their "subject," as contrasted with the whole work, for they took the subject as ground for the judgment of the value of works of art. I find no explicit awareness in either of them of the fact that, when we read poetry or look at paintings in the aesthetic mode of apprehension and when we talk about paintings or poems, as critics do, we are doing two radically different things. But this distinction is essential if we are going to show that Bergson was in opposition to Johnson and Reynolds. In the absence of the distinction the opposition is specious.

The section in Bergson's *Laughter* in which he lays it down that art aims at what is individual starts by asking, "What is the object of art?"[6] Note that Bergson is interested in the function of art, its use, but that he is interested in it in respect to art's capacity to elicit a mode of apprehension. He seems to oscillate from the subject apprehending to the object apprehended, but it is clear that his interest is in the object as a means of enabling the knower to know reality. Reality, he holds, is known by means of metaphysical intuition and by means of the aesthetic experience. The relation between art and metaphysics does not concern us. Bergson has no trouble establishing the point that to meet our utilitarian needs, all that is required is that we be able to distinguish sheep from goats, which we do by means of stereotypes. But knowledge of reality

[6] *Le Rire* (Paris, 1932), pp. 152 ff.

presupposes different requirements, and these are met by art. Art gives us the individual—that is true enough. But in this respect Johnson and Reynolds do not disagree with Bergson, for one agrees that the dramatist puts characters on the stage and the other that the painter paints figures. And both characters and figures are individuals. The difference —and there is a difference—is that Bergson is interested in two distinct modes of perception and does not care whether the individual that is presented by poet or painter is idealized or not. Indeed he tells us explicitly that the dispute between idealism and realism in art arises from a misunderstanding. But it is this dispute that, in terms appropriate to their language, is the central concern of the older writers. For Johnson and Reynolds it is not a question of how to apprehend art, but how to depict characters and figures, not a question of two equally good styles, the difference between which arises from a misunderstanding, but of one style, the superior, and what constitutes it, as against another that is inferior. Shakespeare is a better poet than other poets because his characters speak and act by the influence of those general principles by which all minds are agitated; and the painter who is a master of the grand style is better than the Dutch, because he will not exhibit the minute discriminations which will distinguish one object of the same species from another.

Let me conclude by saying that all these observations are put forth in self-deprecating diffidence, for my knowledge of the eighteenth century is a school boy's knowledge, if that, while Wimsatt's is the knowledge of a seasoned and acute scholar. I dare hope that there may be something in what I have said, and am comforted by the thought that all the erudition and acuteness of mind a writer can muster are not enough to save him from the illness to which eclecticism is prone.

IV

There is one important aspect of Wimsatt's theory of criticism that calls for very careful scrutiny, since it constitutes the heart of his theory of poetry. I mean that suggested by the title of the book. In a Note preceding the Introduction, and explaining the title, Wimsatt tells us that "the verbal image that most fully realizes its verbal capacities is that which is not merely a bright picture (in the usual modern meaning of the term *image*) but also an interpretation of reality in its metaphoric and symbolic dimensions." I am afraid that, intended to elucidate the term "verbal icon," the note has done nothing but mystify one reader. I cannot find in the 293 pages of text and notes that make up the book a discussion of the metaphoric and symbolic dimensions of reality, and I am perplexed because I cannot surrender the conviction that it is poetry and not reality that is metaphoric and symbolic. But it may be a matter of my inability to read English, since the antecedent of "its" may be "interpretation" and not "reality." In any case one is left wondering

what Wimsatt means by poetry. The subtitle of the book is "Studies in the Meaning of Poetry," and its content shows that the author is interested in finding out how poetry means, not what this or that poem means. I have faith that Wimsatt has a clear and sound answer to the question and that he could give it to us, did he choose to do so. I have no doubt that he has wrestled successfully with the rather difficult problem as to what the objects are to which poetry refers, and what status in being they have. Without clarity on this point, the answer to the question as to how poetry means must remain unclear. But I cannot report to the reader that he has chosen to let us in on the secret. He is extremely vague as to what poetry means because he does not tell us what he means by imitation, although he feels strongly that the imitation theory gives a valid account of poetry, and because what he tells us about how poetry means is unacceptable. The three observations that follow will substantiate my claim in so far as it can be done in a relatively narrow compass.

(A) In order easily to reach the heart of the difficulty, let us consider the "three main poles" to which Wimsatt wants to do justice in his theory of poetry: "(1) the mimetic or Aristotelian, which does justice to the world of things and real values and keeps our criticism from being merely idealistic; (2) the emotive (as seen, for instance, in Richards), which does justice to human response to values and keeps criticism from talking too much about either ethics or metaphysics; (3) the expressionistic and linguistic (*par excellence*, the Crocean), which does justice to man's knowledge as reflexive and creative and keeps criticism from talking about poetry as a literal recording of either things or responses" (p. 49). Because Wimsatt wants to do justice to these disparate "poles" he accepts the easy way of eclecticism. But the easy way is no way at all, for mixing points of view generates radical confusions. "Points of view cannot be slipped in and out of our minds like lantern slides." What is called for here, if we are to have a theory which can meet the tests to which a theory ought to be subjected before it is acceptable, is a radical criticism of Aristotle, Richards, and Croce (using these names as metaphors) and a genuine synthesis, which is to say, a systematically argued new theory.

Before we address ourselves to the main question let us consider in passing the cavalier manner in which the second pole is interpreted. It is the early Richards whose views are at issue here, because it was the writer of *The Principles of Literary Criticism, Science and Poetry,* and *Practical Criticism,* and perhaps the next two books, who influenced men like Brooks. Does Richards do "justice to our human response to value"? Richards would have argued that, thus phrased, the problem is a blunder or, as he himself put it, "a curious survival of abstractionism." Value was for Richards, and for all I know may still be, constituted by

impulses or appetencies, the satisfaction of which by appropriate objects *are* the values. The difference is not merely verbal. The manner in which Wimsatt formulates Richards' "pole" gives the theory an appearance of objectivity that Richards rigorously and explicitly eschewed. The radical incoherences we find in Richards, as I have shown elsewhere, have one of their roots in his subjectivism.

But let this be as it may. In pole (3) Wimsatt wants to do justice to the creative factor in the artistic process. But in pole (1) he shows that he is also fully aware that a poem is about something. And since, with the majority of American philosophers, he implicitly equates being and existence, it turns out that a poem cannot be about anything else than the world of things and real values. Elsewhere in a different context, he is confident that we must grant "that the 'subject matter' of poetry is in a broad sense the moral realm, human actions as good or bad, with all their associated feelings, all the thought and imagination that goes with human happiness and suffering" (p. 82). I believe it is this conviction that leads him to assert that poetry, objectively considered, is "a body of cognitive and analyzable meaning" (p. 86).

It would be pleasant indeed if the problems posed by poles (1) and (3) could be resolved so easily as our author resolves them. In order to show they cannot, we shall have to look with care into at least one of them. In what sense, let me ask, is poetry a body of cognitive meaning? We can say there is knowledge when there is a determinate object or state of affairs, a thing, about which an assertion is made, such that the assertion is adequate to the thing or object or state of affairs. But assertions are not isolated and self-contained; they must be related to other assertions by determinate rules, in such a manner that deductions or inferences may be made from them about states of affairs not given. I have stated what I take to be knowledge in terms of realistic epistemology and the correspondence theory of truth because, unless I totally misread Wimsatt, he himself holds to realism and correspondence. But the point could also be made in terms of an idealist or a pragmatic epistemology and a coherence or a pragmatic theory of truth. The point is this—that we do not have knowledge unless we have determinate rules by which our assertions are tested for truth. These rules are not *ad hoc*, they are valid independently of the assertions they test and prior to them in the order of logic, although sometimes they are only formulated explicitly after they have long been in use. But can we speak of assertions in poetry? What does *King Lear* assert? It presents, it does not assert. Assertions are made by the characters in the play—by Gloucester, for instance, about the late eclipses in the sun and moon, and by bastard Edmund, about the excellent foppery of the world—in order to make possible the presentation of action and value.

But does poetry present the actual world? If it did, the term to employ for the relationship would be "represent." A toastmaster presents

a distinguished speaker; a lawyer represents his client at law, and a congressman is supposed to represent his constituents in Congress. But no addict of imitation, with the exception of Plato, according to inept, simplistic interpretations of his views, and of ignorant men whose opinions we need not reckon with, would allow that what he intends is a one-to-one correspondence between poetry and the actual. And it is this something-over-and-above the actual, this other than the actual, that gives rise to the difficulty for the man who wants to hold that poetry is a body of cognitive meaning. If poetry gives us knowledge it is a very special kind of knowledge, or rather "knowledge" in a very special sense. And one would have expected of a man studying "the meaning of poetry" that he would have had something illuminating to say on this all-important topic. Until he does, his statement that poetry is a body of cognitive meaning is a pious pronouncement of faith.

Let us next assume, contrary to what we know, that poetry asserts. Even then we shall find that no controls can be brought to bear on what we take to be its assertions. The poem must be consistent with its presuppositions—that is to say, with all the factors, aesthetic and other, that control the selection of subject matter and the elaboration the poet gives to it in order to inform it into the substance of his work. But these presuppositions exercise control not logically but aesthetically, they are *ad hoc*, and we expect them to be changed from poet to poet, or at least from school to school, and we take it to be a sign of capacity for growth when, in the work of one poet, we find them successively changed in a continuous direction from one poem to the next. If poetry be a body of cognitive meaning, it should again be obvious that the word "cognitive" is used differently than we use it in science or in philosophy. To say that poetry is cognitive is merely to pose a problem, and a formidable one at that, not to solve one.

(B) Let us look at another difficulty which Wimsatt does not avoid. He is convinced that poetry is about the world of things and real values. And he is confident that by asserting the third pole he does justice to man's knowledge as reflexive and creative and thus keeps us from talking about poetry as a literal recording of either things or responses. It is unfortunate that he chooses to formulate the third pole in the manner in which he does, and I hope that I do not misunderstand him when I take him to mean that he wants to do justice to the creative factor in the artistic process, which appears in the poem objectively as novelty. If he does not mean something like this, the remarks in this paragraph and in the next above have to be withdrawn. But I do not see what else he can mean, although I do not know what to do with "knowledge as reflexive" if my interpretation of what is intended by pole (3) is adequate. I have asked several friends what the expression might mean and one of them has suggested that it probably refers to the idealist theory of

knowledge, according to which the world is created by the mind, and in this way "reflexive," rather than discovered by a mind and external to it. Perhaps this is what it means, but in that case one is left wondering why Wimsatt had to formulate his thought in such a clumsy and cryptic manner. Clumsy, because "reflexive" is synonymous with "creative" and should have been joined to it by an "or" rather than an "and." And cryptic, because only a solipsist would claim that knowledge folds intentionally back on the mind itself and does not shoot intentionally towards an object that is in some sense distinct from the mind that envisages it. In any case, one must ask the following question: If the poem is about the world of things and real values, where and how does the creative factor show itself objectively? Insofar as the poet adds to things and values he has experienced prior to the writing of the poem, insofar as he makes them other than they really are (however the term "really" be interpreted), things and real values are not symbolically presented in the poem as they are in the world outside the poem, the actual world. Nor are the values symbolically exhibited by the poem those espoused by actual men in the actual world. And if the poem exhibits by means of language the things found in the actual world and the values actually espoused, then where or how does it exhibit the creativity of the poet? It exhibits it in its form, not its substance, you may reply. But either the form alters the substance or it does not. If it does, the objection remains —the things and values exhibited are not verbal representations of actual values and things. If it does not, we are splitting form and substance, losing the wholeness of the poem, and are headed straight for the ornamentalism that Wimsatt so justly condemns in the Chicagoans.

Should Wimsatt retort that I misread his Note and that he has stated clearly that the verbal image is a metaphoric and symbolic interpretation of reality, and that it is this that gives him the right to assert creativity, I reply that I have not overlooked this statement. But if we are to understand the phrase "a metaphoric and symbolic interpretation of reality" so as to make room for the creative factor—and such a reading would not be absurd—then we have to go back to the observations already made: The poet does not imitate, his act of vision is constitutive in the idealistic sense, he creates and does not discover, and the relation of the poem to its substance and to the world of things and real values—meaning the actual things and the values actually espoused—needs to be explored, for we no longer can fall back on an unqualified realistic epistemology. Twist the meaning of imitation in such a way that you can read creativity into it—as you must, if you are going to both talk about imitation and do justice to the total aesthetic process—and you are up against a difficult problem, for you will have to give an account of the status in being of that to which the poem refers or is about. Frequently the eclectic doubles his troubles when, by mixing theories, he thinks he is making things easy for himself.

(C) But we have not yet reached the end of our difficulties. For Wimsatt would have it that poems are verbal icons, and in the Note preceding the Introduction, already referred to, he is kind enough to define for the reader who is not acquainted with the literature of semiotics how the term "icon" is employed by semiotic aestheticians today. It is used to "refer to a verbal sign that somehow shares properties of, or resembles, the objects it denotes." This is a correct definition. I have shown elsewhere that semiotic aesthetics is a crypto-imitation theory, open to objections similar to those I have advanced in the preceding paragraphs. But, in addition to these objections, two others must be brought up against it. The first, which I shall only state, for its justification would take us far afield, holds for all art; the second applies to poetry. The first is that an object of art which functions iconically for the beholder does not function as an aesthetic object. The second is that, when one calls on the defender of the theory to show with reasonable specificity how language, outside of onomatopoesis, is iconic, all the theorist can do is speak vaguely or speak foolishly.

In support of his belief in the iconicity of language, Wimsatt refers (p. 203) to Chapter XIII of Wellek and Warren's *Theory of Literature*, but when we turn to the pertinent passage (pp. 163-164) we find that these authors concede that studies like those of Maurice Grammont are open to the charges generally made against such claims, namely that the relation between sound and meaning discovered is grounded on subjective associations. We are left then with what the authors call the "physiognomy" of words, which they claim is a sound symbolism far more pervasive than mere onomatopoeia. The authors write: "There is no doubt that synaesthetic combinations and associations permeate all languages and these correspondences have been quite rightly exploited and elaborated by the poets" (p. 164). That the sound of language is exploited and elaborated by the poet is not denied, of course. Nor need anyone deny that there may be synaesthetic combinations and associations, possibly collective or social, and in that sense objective, as distinguished from subjective or idiosyncratic ones, between sound and meaning. It is not improper to reiterate that these combinations and associations are more often spoken about in general terms than exhibited concretely. But let that pass. Is it not obvious that when Wimsatt calls these combinations and associations "iconic" he has radically changed the meaning of the term "icon" from that specified in his Note? Wellek and Warren do not use the term "icon" in the pages here in question, although they are of course acquainted with the work of Charles Morris, to which they refer in another connection.

V

Were this review intended as an exhaustive examination of Wimsatt's theory of literature, I would have to comment on several essays

to which I have made no reference, particularly the essays in Section 4, "The Domain of Criticism," "Explication and Criticism," "History and Criticism," and "Poetry and Christian Thinking," and the essay which for some reason he chose to put in Section 2, "Poetry and Morals." Of these, the last seems to me the most brilliant, even though it suffers from a defect that we have already scrutinized from another perspective—it assumes that *Antony and Cleopatra* celebrates "the passionate surrender of an illicit love, the victory of this love over practical, political, and moral concerns, and the final superiority of the suicide lovers over circumstance." I shall not argue the point here, but shall assert dogmatically that, insofar as a poem "celebrates" values instead of presenting them or revealing them, it is propaganda and not art, not pure art. But granting the assumption—and it must be granted in the sense that many readers read poems as if in fact the poems intended to celebrate values, whether this is their proper function or not—the essay is an admirable exhibition of acuity and sensitive discrimination. The other essays just mentioned do not reach the level of this one. "The Domain of Criticism" has been commented on by Wimsatt's colleague, T. M. Greene.[7] With almost all of Greene's observations a fellow aesthetician would, naturally, be expected to agree. In "Explication as Criticism" the central problem concerns the relation of value-free fact, as we say in philosophy, to value. This is a baffling problem on which much has been written by American philosophers to little purpose. To expect Wimsatt to solve it in a few pages is, in the language of Sancho, to ask pears of the elm tree. But the weakness of the essay, I have suggested already, is not Wimsatt's fault. The problem he proposes to clarify can only be defined, cannot be resolved, in a few pages. Wimsatt does define his problem satisfactorily. The essay on "History and Criticism" examines four possible relations between the two disciplines. Here, again, Wimsatt's analytic mind is at its best. In one sense this essay can be considered an amplification of some of the doctrines put forth in the two essays written in collaboration with Beardsley. The last essay in the book, "Poetry and Christian Thinking," brings Wimsatt back to a central concern of his, the relation of the language of poetry to what it is about. Stated in general terms, this is the central question of contemporary aesthetics, and troubles the general aesthetician as regards all the arts and not only poetry or painting. It worries Wimsatt, whose interest in poetry is serious and who is also a human being, a man who has other serious interests, moral, cognitive, religious, and who is seeking a way of defining the function of poetry so as to do justice to the place it actually occupies in culture, and yet does not want to turn it into mere moralizing or philosophizing ornamentally presented.

The major part of this review has sought to bring to light those as-

[7] *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, VIII (1950), 221-228.

pects of Wimsatt's theory of literature which seem to the reviewer to require strengthening or correcting. These defects flow, I am convinced, from Wimsatt's eclecticism. But I would be doing him a major injustice if I failed to reiterate in closing that my approach, apparently negative, is not intended to leave the impression on the reader that I think little of his contribution. I would not have examined it as I have if I had thought he was not worth my and my reader's time and effort. I have referred to Wimsatt's acuity. This is the dominant quality of his mind. Another quality I have left unmentioned. Wimsatt is that rare kind of man, a searcher. It is not a question, with him, of an alleged "pluralism" which conceals arrogance, intolerance, and dogmatism. Fortunately this quality can be exhibited by a few lines of the last paragraph of his last essay:

> What then is an adequately serious view of poetry? I submit that this has always been, and remains, difficult if not impossible to define with any rigor. What is the formula by which we shall recognize the metaphoric capacities of language and the moral importance of valid linguistic expression without surrendering our conception of truth as a thing beyond language, without yielding to the lead of the idealistic symbolists, the ritualists, and the myth-makers? I confess I do not clearly see the answer. I have not found the book in which the answer is permanently and canonically formulated. But I insist that this question is a real and important one—and not only for dogmatic Christians and less dogmatic Christians, but for all persons who are interested to inquire into the norms by which they live.

With these views any one acquainted with the literature on the subject can only agree. Hear, hear!

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BOOK REVIEWS

ETUDE DES BACCHANALES OU LE FOLASTRISSIME VOYAGE D'HERCUEIL. FAIT L'AN 1549, PAR RONSARD. By André Desguine. Geneva: Droz, 1953. 367 p., 12 plates.

Ronsard's *Bacchanales* is a poetic account of a holiday excursion from Paris to near-by Arcueil, where the chief attraction for the young scholars of the Collège de Coqueret was the remains of a Roman aqueduct. Dorat, too, immortalized the holiday in verse, in a Latin ode that was lost or ignored until 1921. Ronsard's poem has not had a much more brilliant fate, undoubtedly because of its rather imitative and recondite qualities. M. Desguine, in presenting his critical edition of the poem, evidently feels that it deserves better than the scant attention it has received. Enthusiasm for heretofore ignored areas of Ronsard's poetry is quite timely in view of the general movement of critical re-evaluation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which has been in progress for some years now. Unfortunately, the author of the present study fails to take advantage of all the opportunities for newer, fresher points of view on the great Renaissance poet, and is frequently disappointing in his unquestioning acceptance of the critical approach of past generations of scholarship.

Despite his appreciation of the *Bacchanales*, M. Desguine does not, for example, make thoroughly clear the nature of the good qualities that he finds in the poem. He insists that in its better parts it is a "chef-d'œuvre de nouveauté" (p. 101), and that it is the work in which Ronsard "pour la première fois cède et s'abandonne à son génie" (p. 87). If this is true, M. Desguine would have rendered a valuable service to Ronsard studies by indicating more precisely what aspects of the *Bacchanales* can be considered "novel," in comparison with both Ronsard's previous writings and the poetic developments of the first half of the sixteenth century as a whole.

In justifying the selection of the *editio princeps* as the basis for his edition, M. Desguine explains his choice, rather surprisingly, by the fact that Ronsard mentions in the earliest text eleven of his colleagues at the Collège de Coqueret (in later editions, the names of several members of the pre-Pléiade group are replaced by those of more recent friends of the poet). Desguine defends his reasoning by citing a letter from Paul Laumonier (p. 18), who also considers historical exactitude of primary importance in selecting a text for critical study. However, information about the identity of Ronsard's fellow students in 1549—no matter how helpful as historical documentation—is not necessarily very revealing poetically.

In connection with the choice of the *editio princeps*, Desguine inadvertently raises other and perhaps more interesting questions when he quotes (p. 19) a passage from Ronsard's contemporary, Claude Dupuy, writing in 1588 to Gian-Vincenzo Pinelli: "J'aimerois beaucoup mieux les premieres editions que ces dernieres, esquelles il [Ronsard] a tout gasté selon mon jugement, aiant osté plusieurs belles pieces et changé les plus beaus et hardis traits des autres, de maniere qu'on n'y recongnoist quasi plus ce grand Ronsard." Since it is a commonplace that one's contemporaries are frequently not the soundest critics of the flaws and merits of one's artistic production, it is somewhat startling to find M. Desguine seriously citing such a judgment in corroboration of his own. It is even more surprising that he does not examine the implications of a critical appraisal of this sort expressed at that particular moment of literary history. Why should a contemporary of Ronsard's prefer the original form of any given work to the form reworked and polished for later editions? To what extent is

such a preference valid, not only in 1588 but in 1953? What tendencies are indicated by Ronsard's textual emendations in his later years, and can modern scholarly critics wholeheartedly agree that "ce grand Ronsard" is no longer recognizable because of them? More succinctly, what aspect of Ronsard's poetry represents "ce grand Ronsard" for Claude Dupuy, and does it also represent the greatness of Ronsard for the modern reader? It is unfortunate that Desguine has not added to the value to his study by at least acknowledging the existence of these troublesome questions.

At the same time, he has failed to coordinate the variant readings with the text in a coherent manner. The variants are reproduced in a special section following the poem, and there is no attempt to characterize, comment on, or explain the general nature of the changes indicated. The reader can only regret that the variants were not at least made more readily accessible—perhaps in the form of footnotes to each page—so that he could establish for himself the relative importance of Ronsard's alterations of the original. (A casual study of the variants reveals the most striking changes to be suppressions—twenty-seven of the original one hundred and seven stanzas are omitted in later editions.)

M. Desguine's fundamental attitude seems to be that the original work, without suppressions or changes, is somehow better poetry because it is more "natural" (p. 17). With no better explanation than this, the connection between good poetry and "naturalness" seems tenuous enough; for it would be absurd to deny to a poet the right to rewrite his early poems to conform to his maturer tastes and standards of perfection. If the original form is "natural" to the young man, the revised poem may be no less natural to the older poet. At a later point M. Desguine returns to this concept when he asserts that Ronsard's best poetry was always that which was the freest and the most natural, by which he means those poems resulting from direct emotional reactions sufficiently powerful to make the poet forget his Greek and Latin masters (p. 50). Elsewhere he says that the classical fervor of the young members of the Brigade was their downfall rather than a source of inspiration, and he adds that the young Ronsard would have done better to "follow his Muse" than to imitate his classical masters (pp. 31 ff.). This is a time-worn cliché of romantic criticism. Ronsard himself would have been highly skeptical of so neat a separation of Muse (= inspiration?) and the study of the authors of antiquity, and he might have suggested that his Muse was *both* the divine breath of inspiration *and* the poet's assiduous comprehension of his literary ancestors. "Le meilleur Ronsard fut toujours celui qui ne dut rien à Pindare, rien à l'Italie, ancienne ou moderne, comme le meilleur Marot est resté le plus naturel" (p. 50). It seems rash to say with such assurance that the best Ronsard owes nothing to these sources. Is not his greatness rather in direct proportion to his ability to assimilate elements borrowed from Greek and Latin poetic disciplines and to fuse them into something which is both French and intimately personal? Only in some such sense, probably, could his best poetry be called the most natural.

M. Desguine observes quite aptly that the poem is really two poems, as the title itself suggests, or at least is composed of two distinct elements, one of which (the dithyramb or *Bacchanales*) interrupts at intervals the other and longer part (the actual narrative of the trip to Arcueil). After 1560, however, Ronsard dropped the first part of the title ("Les Bacchanales"). Desguine thinks that this was due to the unequal distribution of lines between the two parts (of the poem's 642 lines, only 120 are devoted to the dithyramb). He distinguishes numerous poetic currents behind each of the two parts. Among these is a poetic strain that Desguine calls "la tradition gauloise," which Ronsard "discovered" in the Middle Ages through Marot. This tradition includes such familiar motifs of

French poetry ("le courant poétique reflétant les qualités et les défauts de la race de France"—p. 55) as those of pretty mistresses and good wine. Even though there is no question of lady friends ("Laissons au logis ces femmes"—line 151) in the poem, and though the theme of food and drink has more of the flavor of a literary orgy than of a real *débauche*, M. Desguine sees in Ronsard's handling of these traditional elements an early manifestation of his "tempérament sensuel" and his "épicurisme foncier" (p. 56). Since Desguine himself acknowledges the fact that young poets everywhere sing of wine and their ladyloves, this rather flat assertion may cause picayune readers to demand internal evidence of the sensual and epicurean tendencies to which the poem testifies. Perhaps Desguine has been too ready to accept the formulas in which Ronsard has been categorized by scholars for the past fifty to a hundred years—formulas which have taken on all the aspects of pat critical clichés and which are still applied all too often without examination of their validity. Ronsard's "sensualism" and "epicureanism" were in excellent keeping, not only with the classical poets which he and his contemporaries studied so vividly, but also with the general tenor of his entire epoch, which encouraged and appreciated such enjoyments.

The one hundred and twenty lines of dithyrambic verse are more or less obvious imitation of various other writers of Bacchic verse.[1] Desguine admits that this part of the poem seems when isolated to be "une œuvre artificielle et pédante" (p. 87), but he finds that the intermingling of the two parts produces an interesting and deliberate effect of contrast between the gaiety of the young men's amusements and the religious fervor of the Bacchic visions. His enthusiasm notwithstanding, it is difficult to see in the mixture of dithyramb and *récit de voyage* more than an awkward attempt to impart a classical atmosphere to a poem which is essentially something else, and even more difficult to see in the dithyramb itself anything more than an erudite imitation of other hymns to Bacchus. It *is* an artificial interlude, and one which effectively destroys the homogeneity of an otherwise pleasant and unpretentious poem.

The question of the religious fervor of the *Bacchanales* is raised elsewhere by Desguine ("Ronsard et le culte de Bacchus," pp. 36-39) when he says that the details of the Bacchic cult obsessed Ronsard's imagination and that he tried—more or less seriously—to reanimate it. The stages of his "delirium" (p. 37) are marked by several poems (from the *Bacchanales* in 1549 to the *Hinne de Bacchus* in 1554) in which the vocabulary and the epithets peculiar to these rites have an important part. These terms seem exaggerated as applied to Ronsard. It is possible that M. Desguine is unduly influenced on this score by the attitude of those of Ronsard's contemporaries who were scandalized by such activities as the "pompe du bouc," for Ronsard could hardly have sought to "reanimate" the Bacchic cult on any other than a purely literary plane. It was probably understood by him as a means of rejuvenating and ennobling lyric poetry. Recognition of the obvious superficiality of such a technique may have had something to do with his abandoning the title *Bacchanales* after 1560.

[1] The problem of sources is an interesting one; unfortunately, Desguine does not distinguish with sufficient care between possible sources and direct influences, so that we are left in some doubt about their relative importance for Ronsard. We are told, for instance, that the dithyrambs were "inspired" by the *Hymnus Baccho* of the Neo-Latin poet Marullos (p. 80), even though "le texte de Marulle n'autorise qu'un rapprochement assez vague de tendances, non d'idées ni d'expressions avec les *Bacchanales*" (p 83). A few pages later we find that the dithyramb "imitated" the chorus of the Bacchantes which closes Poliziano's *Orfeo* (p. 85). Still further, Desguine calls the dithyramb a "paraphrase" of Dorat's Latin ode composed at Arcueil (p. 87).

The critical apparatus of the book is, generally speaking, too lengthy and tends to be one-sided in its emphasis. The explanatory notes following the text of the poem are more detailed than the complexity of the text actually warrants (434 notes as compared to 642 lines in the poem) and are frequently devoted to explaining the obvious (e.g., notes 70 and 131). Certain information is repeated unnecessarily: see especially notes 34 and 74, 133 and 134, 79 and 166. Desguine feels that the most important aspect of the variant readings has to do with Ronsard's vocabulary (pp. 21 ff.), and concentrates his attention on philology, as a means of establishing the exact meaning of certain words, and on orthography. In so doing, however, he supposes an ignorance of some of the fundamentals of philology[2] and of language[3] most unlikely in the sort of reader to whom his study is addressed. On the other hand, although fluctuations in spelling are assiduously noted, there is no attempt to synthesize or to draw conclusions from Ronsard's tendencies in spelling, or to connect them in a coherent manner with the question of spelling reform in the sixteenth century (the importance of which is so strongly emphasized in the preliminary essay, pp. 21-23). Desguine refers in a footnote (note 7, p. 23) to Vianey's thesis that, after 1555, Ronsard's corrections in spelling and vocabulary foreshadow Malherbe's reforms, but he makes no further reference to this valuable suggestion. At times the refusal to comment on an interesting peculiarity of Ronsard's poetic language is exasperating, as, for example, in note 219 (Ronsard's consistent use of *teste* when *chef* was the accepted word in sixteenth-century poetic language), and notes 207, 261, and 290 (Ronsard's fixing of the spelling of certain words in their modern form in all editions following the first, in spite of the very variable spelling of these same words admitted by all sixteenth-century lexicographers).

The documentation of the "Etude préliminaire" is also unnecessarily detailed for the material in question. One tends to get lost in exhaustive developments of purely secondary material, and it is frequently difficult to find one's way back through the numerous footnotes to the original title of an *op. cit.* This difficulty is augmented by the absence of a critical bibliography; the twenty-page bibliography at the end of the book is restricted to works of sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century writers consulted by the author. The footnotes are encumbered by Desguine's disturbing tendency to support even the most conservative critical generalizations by citing the authority of other scholars (as note 252, p. 99; note 147, p. 77; note 258, p. 101; and note 50, p. 44).

M. Desguine's study is valuable chiefly in the historical domain of Ronsard studies. He has situated the poem carefully and well as a part of Ronsard's youthful activity and as a part of the sixteenth-century literary vogue. Desguine's truly imposing knowledge of sixteenth-century authors enables him to make many comparisons and rapprochements between Ronsard's poem, its possible sources, and subsequent treatments of similar themes. By reprinting many of these related works and by giving detailed information on writers whose influence on Ronsard had been attested but not discussed by Laumonier, he has made of his book a valuable supplement to Laumonier's edition of the *Bacchanales.* The book is handsomely presented; it closes with a series of excellent photographic facsimiles of the original text of the *Bacchanales* (1552).

Our chief regret in connection with a book representing so many years of labor is that the author did not use his time and energies to still better effect;

[2] Such as the palatalization of *-al* and *-ol* to *-au* and *-ou*, and the softening of Vulgar Latin *-b-* to *-v-*.

[3] Note 113, for example, explains that "pousser les nerfz du luth" means to play the lute.

rather than repeating and underlining the old ideas and attitudes (a habit for which he reproaches Ronsard), he might have given us a fresher and more personal evaluation of a poem which he obviously admires most sincerely.

JANET MARKHAM ROACH

Lake Hiawatha, N. J.

NIETZSCHE IN THE EARLY WORK OF THOMAS MANN. By R. A. Nicholls. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1955. vi, 119 p. (University of California Publications in Modern Philology, Vol. 45.)

Thomas Mann himself has frequently and willingly acknowledged the tremendous influence that Nietzsche, along with Schopenhauer and Wagner, exerted on him. The author of this short study mentions two such instances—in the *Observations of a Nonpolitical Man* and the *Sketch of My Life*—where Mann specifically points to Nietzsche as a man who vitally shaped his thought and work. Thus it is entirely fitting that this relationship should finally have been examined, and by an author like Nicholls who is thoroughly familiar with the work of both writers.

Nicholls' main thesis is that Mann in his early years was fascinated by Nietzsche the analyst of cultural decadence, and had a deep and abiding feeling of kinship with him; at the same time, he was quite uninterested in Nietzsche the prophet of the Superman (this is most cogently argued in the chapter on *Fiorenza*). So great was the distortion suffered by Nietzsche's reputation during the first half of this century that the point cannot be made too often that what Nicholls calls Nietzsche's "lyrical Renaissance aestheticism" and his "adulation for Cesare Borgia ethics" (p. 61) in no way invalidates his social and cultural analyses—some of the most penetrating to which Western man has ever been subjected. Examining the basis of Mann's interest in Nietzsche, Nicholls clearly draws a dividing line between Nietzsche's works and his posthumous reputation. For Mann, Nietzsche was primarily the author of *Thoughts Out of Season*, the *Genealogy of Morals*, and *Human, All-Too-Human*; these works guided him in his search for the causes and symptoms of moral and intellectual deterioration. Of special merit in this connection is Nicholls' examination of linguistic affinities between these works and some of Mann's own; he traces words like "Ekel" ("Erkenntnisekel" in *Tonio Kröger*) which are common, in this connotation, to both authors.

Nicholls' quotations from Nietzsche, incidentally, are from the translation edited by Oscar Levy, *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche* (Edinburgh and London, 1909-13). If this still is—as it appears to be—the only English version, it is surely time for a new one to be forthcoming! Only when we have a readable text to go by will the vindication of the "real" Nietzsche (as pioneered here, or in Walter Kaufmann's *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, Princeton, 1950) really come about.

If Nicholls' book has a weakness, it lies in the basic *Problemstellung*. Mann's preoccupation with Nietzsche, culminating as it does in *Doktor Faustus*, far transcends the period here reviewed (ending with *Observations of a Nonpolitical Man*, 1919). This study merely whets the appetite, because the reader knows, as does of course the author, that the deepest and most definite manifestation of Nietzschean influence lies outside the scope of his book. It is a little like reading about "Italy in Shakespeare's Works" without taking into account *The Merchant of Venice* and *Romeo and Juliet*!

Nicholls has limited himself to the "early" work. But just what is "early"?

It is undoubtedly necessary, for the purposes of scholarly investigation, to "subdivide" many an author (or work, or period, or relationship). But this is never more than a necessary evil. Sometimes it can be done without too much violence to something as profoundly organic as a writer's thought and work; Wordsworth comes to mind as one who can reasonably be dissected, at least into "early" and "late." However, with a living author this is an exceedingly hazardous procedure. It is no fault of Nicholls' that within a couple of months of the publication of his book, Thomas Mann published the continuation of his *Bekenntnisse des Hochstaplers Felix Krull*; but it does point up the artificiality of such a division. After the Second World War, Mann took up this story where he had left it well before the First, and it is highly doubtful if anyone could tell, except by checking the two editions, just where the older part ends and the new one begins (a point well made by Robert Faesi in his "Thomas Mann's 'Bekenntnisse des Hochstaplers Felix Krull,'" *Neue Schweizer Rundschau*, XXII, 1954, 403-416). The greatness and the limitation of Thomas Mann lie precisely in the fact that his is truly a case of "Mon verre n'est pas grand, mais je bois dans mon verre."

Even so, the omission of that part of the *Bekenntnisse* which does fall within the arbitrarily defined scope of Nicholls' book is surprising. The work is mentioned only once, in passing (p. 49). This reviewer is not qualified to say how it fits into Mann's relationship to Nietzsche, but he would certainly subscribe to Faesi's thesis that the *Bekenntnisse* are utterly "typical" of Thomas Mann, a draught out of the same "verre" whence came his other works. According to Nicholls' own argument, the book must *eo ipso* bear witness to the Mann-Nietzsche relationship. To give an example: Nicholls rightly deals at some length with the concept of the actor in the two authors, and says that "it is at the basis of Nietzsche's repudiation of the artist that he sees him as an actor and pretender" (p. 32, on *Tonio Kröger*). But nowhere has Mann expressed more forcibly the ambivalence of his own feelings in regard to the actor and the artist than in the ("early") *Bekenntnisse*, where the hero is taken backstage by his father to see the matinee idol who has just been a vision of top-hatted elegance, and finds him slouching over his dressing table, in soiled underwear, sweaty, covered with pimples, and almost clinically prosaic! The heroes of this story and of Tonio Kröger are brothers even in name—the actor's name, Müller-Rosé, is the same combination of the exotic-artistic and the bourgeois that we find in "Tonio Kröger."

Nicholls' book is solidly documented, and has a comprehensive bibliography of both English and German works on both authors. However, while "Nietzsche" is admittedly an uncomfortable name to proofread, it should not twice be misspelled in a book dealing with him ("Neitzsche," pp. 24 and 62).

WOLFGANG LEPPMANN

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DIE METAMORPHOSEN DER LIEBE UND FRIEDRICH SPEES TRUTZNACHTIGALL. Studien zum Fortleben der Antike, I. By Eric Jacobsen. Copenhagen: Einar Munksgaard, for Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 1954. 194 p.

Pointing out that Spee's *Trutznachtigall* has been largely ignored by scholars, although it is both historically and aesthetically one of the most important documents of the German Catholic baroque period, Jacobsen set himself the task of showing how Spee's figurative material derives substantially from the mystical "Jesusminne" (love of Jesus), formally from the fashionable love language of Petrarch. A special role in his inquiry is assigned to the lore of emblems, a striking example of which is the copper engraving on the title page. To explain the

peculiar and elaborate symbolism of this design, which he designates as the key to the entire work, showing that it was made to Spee's own order, Jacobsen roams far afield and back into classical antiquity, while a couple of modern illustrations show the remarkable persistence of some of the ideas which he follows through their varied representation.

Basically, the love symbolism with which the study is principally concerned goes back to the Bible, and it is amusing to see how pious churchmen turned the glowing sensuality of the Song of Songs into adoration of God, Jesus, Mary, or all three combined. First Origen and then Bernard of Clairvaux established the adaptation of those fleshly images to the mystic relation between the human soul and the divine person.

Pictorically, however, the antecedents of the engraving are on the one hand the personification of love as Cupid (or Venus), on the other hand the Christian symbolism of the crucifixion of Christ, the wounds of his body, and the bleeding heart. So we have in the engraving these items: Jesus with the crown of thorns crucified to a tree and inclining his head toward a seated female figure, with an arrow piercing her breast, who is looking soulfully up at him; in the middle foreground an elaborate fountain, with a bird perched on it (no doubt the "nightingale" of the title), and with water springing from a heart placed in the tall shaft. In other emblems Jesus is shown crucified to the Tree of Life, or (impersonating Cupid) shooting arrows into the worshiper, or supplying the fountain of life with blood from his wounds or his heart. It is clear, then, that on the one hand Spee was drawing on the entire accumulated tradition of love symbolism, while on the other hand he was emphasizing the message of his book as one of love, love of God which ennobles and beautifies the soul that dwells on it. These ideas with their modifications are traced through the body of *Trutznachtigall*, with parallel quotations from other writers as confirmation or contrast.

I am inclined to think that it was an afterthought which led Jacobsen to add a section of thirty pages on purely formal aspects of the work; one minor bit of evidence is the repetition on page 157 of a point he had already made on page 134. The study would have gained if this section, which to be sure contains much interesting and valuable material, had been reserved for separate publication.

As far as the main portion of the monograph is concerned, it seems to this reviewer that the argument, which is closely knit, ably presented, and copiously documented, is both cogent and important, bringing into prominence the postulated interplay between letters and the graphic arts which, plausible in itself, is amply confirmed by the numerous quotations from writers early and late, including Spee himself.

The absence of a formal bibliography, which would have been desirable, is largely made up by extensive bibliographical notes, as well as by the annotated list of the extremely interesting illustrations, whose sources are given. It is to be hoped that the contributions made by Jacobsen to the lore of emblems, and the questions raised by his study, will lead to a systematic and thorough exploration of a fascinating territory which has been too little charted up to now.

BAYARD QUINCY MORGAN

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HUNGRY GENERATIONS: THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY CASE AGAINST MALTHUSIANISM. By Harold R. Boner. New York: King's Crown Press, 1955. viii, 234 p.

The author has worried a single idea through the whole course of nineteenth-century English literature. He has shaken and torn some dozens of authors, from

Coleridge and Southey to George Bernard Shaw, until one can recognize in the resulting clutter only a number of discrete references to what is called "the Malthusian theory."

No doubt there is an interest or even a certain importance to be found in a catalogue of passages that refer to Malthus in the writings of nineteenth-century essayists, novelists, and poets. Although most students of literature hardly need to be reminded of the anti-Malthusian implications of Dickens' *Oliver Twist* or Kingsley's *Alton Locke*, some may be a little surprised at the extent to which the "dismal" doctrine haunted the minds and works of many other writers during the century, great and famous figures as well as several of lesser renown. Writings as different as Shelley's *Queen Mab*, Francis Place's *Illustrations and Proofs of the Principle of Population*, Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, and John Stuart Mill's *The Principles of Political Economy* all appear in Boner's pages as tracts directed against Malthus and his doctrine. To his obvious delight, anti-Malthusianism seemed to take on almost passionate proportions in several, if not in most writers of the period. At the end of his study he professes to have found only "a little band" who were not openly hostile to Malthus—"Macaulay, Miss Martineau, and to some extent De Quincey and Tennyson." In this "fact" he sees "evidence of the sound and healthy relationship between literary men and the major concerns of their society which is one of the greatest distinctions of the nineteenth century in England." Whatever their varied literary merit, Boner is proud of his authors not merely because they refused to bow down "before the grinning image of starvation which Malthus had created" but because they rose up to wage "lonely war against it." His closing words commend them: "In the long struggle to exorcise the Malthusian specter they hold the place of honor" (p. 200).

Boner was able to issue his general commendation because he required of nineteenth-century writers only that they condemn Malthus. If he had added the further requirement that they understand him, most of them would not have come off so well. Indeed Boner himself would not come off very well if judged against that standard. Despite a rapid summarizing of the first edition of the *Essay* (pp. 12-18), he really makes little attempt to develop a definition of Malthusianism out of Malthus's own writings. Instead he strikes out bluntly in his preface and proclaims that "to Malthus, and to the men of the nineteenth century, the most important element in his theory" was the "appalling conclusion" that "the major cause of poverty was the reckless overbreeding of the poor" (p. v). What makes this conclusion especially "appalling" in Boner's view is a pair of practical corollaries: "the demolition of the relief and communistic methods of abolishing poverty" (p. 16), and the consequent "impossibility of relieving the distress of the poor" (p. 38). With such a monstrous conception in his mind, there can be little wonder that Boner should have wished to tell the story of how Malthusianism was "exposed as an invidious and fallacious instrument for concealing exploitation and economic injustice" (p. v).

One does not have to read far in the book before he discovers the conceptual scheme that governs and informs the whole of it. Although Boner professes to be writing about the rise and fall of an idea, he apparently does not feel that ideas have or can have autonomous development of their own. In his view the basic, controlling, driving force in the vast movement of history is class conflict. Ideas acquire real interest only when they relate instrumentally to one or another of the contending classes. Boner begins his history of Malthusianism with an account of how "the man of property" had sunk deep in despair late in the eighteenth century. The "New Philosophy" had so disarmed him that "he could never hope to resist changes far more painful to him than the mere increase of the provisions for relief" (p. 9). Boner sees Malthus entering this situation as a sort of savior.

"No bright star rose over Albury during the winter of 1798," he writes, "nor did any chorus of angels appear to bring to the gentlemen of England glad tidings. But a heroic effort toward their salvation was there being wrought out. Thomas Malthus, bravely surmounting the handicaps of a somewhat limited library and a severe toothache, was single-handed preparing to lift from their shoulders the burden of their fears" (p. 9). This statement is footnoted; but the documentation confirms Malthus's toothache and his limited library, not Malthus's Messianic character.

The controlling influence of class conflict continues throughout the book. Writer after writer aligns himself on the side of the poor and attacks the Malthusian principle, which appears always as a primary weapon of the exploiting rich. Boner will not concede that any intrinsic merit in Malthus's thought can account for its remarkable stamina in the nineteenth century. Instead he speaks repeatedly of the "glaring" fallacies of the theory and even apologizes for his author's failure to detect them more readily (pp. vii, 48, 198). He thinks the staying power of an idea has nothing to do with its logic, coherence, or intellectual force; it is rather the instrumental value of the idea for contending classes that determines whether it will endure. "The acceptance of a social theory," he says, "is likely to depend far more on its usefulness to a dominant social group than on its logical appeal" (p. 198). This is the underlying assumption of his book. It has guided him in the selection and organization of materials, and it contributes didactic significance too. For he feels that his book, "whether it has any more specific value, may illustrate vividly the importance of suspecting our still-existing social doctrines, even—or perhaps especially—our most respectably supported ones, as possible instruments of class advantage" (p. vii).

There is no reason why class conflict may not be properly used as a structural principle in a historical work. Though certain other conceptual schemes might prove more fruitful at the present day, contemporary scholarship has not yet exhausted the usefulness of class conflict. But, if one is to use it or any other such governing idea, he must be constantly on guard lest it get the upper hand over him, lest it cease to be his instrument and become his master. Unfortunately, something like that has happened to Boner. Because he did not resist the improper demands of his conceptual scheme, he has failed to understand either Malthus or his critics. He has claimed as anti-Malthusians men like Francis Place and John Stuart Mill, who accepted Malthus's basic population analysis and who intended to do no more than develop certain practical implications of it; he has gathered in his catch-all category such disparate individuals as Michael Sadler and Nassau Senior, whose respective views on factory reform (one method of aiding the poor) would have set up a cat and dog cacophony in his blissful anti-Malthusian camp.

But the most "glaring" misstatements that the class conflict scheme induces Boner to make concern Malthus himself. Over and over again he declares Malthus's belief in the inevitability of poverty: Malthus believed that "the unalterable imprudence of the poor would inevitably render any assistance vain" (p. 19); he "remained undisturbed in his conviction that no aid could save them from themselves" (p. 59); he assumed "the presence of an innate and immutable trait of imprudence" (p. 67); he "asserted the impossibility of checking their overbreeding" (p. 180). To support this thesis, Boner has ripped quotations out of context and then interpreted them in ways that their contexts will not support. Two such sentences from the first *Essay* are quoted on p. 18: "The truth is, that the pressure of distress on this part of a community is an evil so deeply seated, that no human ingenuity can reach it ... To prevent the recurrence of misery, is, alas! beyond the power of man." The omitted passage between the two sentences includes three pages of text in which Malthus develops his program for relieving

misery in what he thought the only practical way. The passage ends with this statement: "A plan of this kind, the preliminary of which, should be an abolition of all the present parish laws, seems to be the best calculated to increase the mass happiness among the common pleople of England" (*Essay*, p. 98). If one reads only a few pages further in the *Essay* he sees that the impossibility of preventing misery, mentioned in the second of the sentences quoted by Boner, refers to the English poor laws, which Malthus thought but compounded the misery they were intended to relieve.

Malthus was not the champion of vested interest nor the antagonist of the poor that is depicted in Boner's work. But he did hold good intentions to be insufficient by themselves. Successful reform depended upon more than the mere outpouring of sympathy for suffering masses. It had to strike roots in the best available knowledge of human nature and historical reality. Malthus's practical purpose was, as he said, "not to make us give up the improvement of human society in despair," but "to inculcate the necessity of resting contented with that mode of improvement, which is dictated by the course of nature, and of not obstructing the advances, which would otherwise be made" (*Essay*, 2nd ed., pp. 600, 604). Conclusive evidence that Malthus sympathized with the poor and thought it possible to improve their lot in life to some extent, or indefinitely perhaps with the slow advance of reason and civilization, is offered in the chapter, "Of the Wages of Labour," in his *Principles of Political Economy* (2nd ed., pp. 217-261). This important work, which reveals so much about both the character and the limitations of the Malthusian idea, is not even included in Boner's bibliography. He makes no mention either of other works on Malthusianism that have appeared recently. Two of these might have been used to considerable advantage: Kenneth Smith, *The Malthusian Controversy* (London, 1951), and G. F. McCleary, *The Malthusian Population Theory* (London, 1953). The first of these might have served as a sort of pattern for responsible criticism of Malthus and his principle; the second could well have imparted something of the penetrating insight and sympathetic understanding that are indispensable in the history of ideas, or indeed in any history whatever.

The literary historian has an important field of research to work in the study of relationships between literature and ideas, but he serves no scholarly purpose if his understanding is confined to the literary member of this interacting pair. Boner has not written what he claims to have written, "a history of the rise and fall of the Malthusian theory in nineteenth-century England" (p. v). Rather he has written a history of the rise and fall of the Malthusian myth.

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THE TRAGEDIES OF GEORGE CHAPMAN. By Ennis Rees. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1954. 223 p.

This book is an important and valid reinterpretation of Chapman's tragedies as an expression of Christian humanism. The only other full-length studies concerned with this aspect of Chapman have been in French: Jacquot's recent *George Chapman, sa vie, sa poésie, son théâtre, sa pensée* (1951), sound but rather general, and Schoell's earlier *Etudes sur l'humanisme continental en Angleterre* (1926), specifically useful in showing Chapman's indebtedness to Ficino and Erasmus. Many briefer studies have either overemphasized his obvious stoicism (mere stoical ideas do not make a Stoic) or falsely emphasized his latent modernity (defiance of necessity does not produce an existentialist).

Mr. Rees analyzes the plays as the "dramatic expression" of an "ethical and religious creed" (Preface). He never neglects the "dramatic" while pursuing the "ethical." He avoids the common critical error of overlooking dramatic contingency, and stresses the purely dramatic relevance of speeches heretofore often probed for content out of context. Censuring those critics who identify the dramatist with his characters, he insists rather on the more legitimate identification of the poet with his poem. He submits any apparently doctrinaire lines in the plays to comparison with the more personal and explicit poems. Yet Mr. Rees's main contribution is a clear exposition of Chapman's ethics, first in his opening chapter on Christian humanism, then in successive exegeses of the five tragedies.

Citing Chapman's epigram, "Learning, the art is of good life: they then / That lead not good lives, are not learned men," Mr. Rees discusses the implications of learning as the core of this humanistic creed. Whereas mere knowledge may lead to Machiavellian *virtù*, i.e., mere policy or self-seeking, "true" knowledge, inseparable from religion, is the criterion of Christian virtue. Such learning succeeds by evoking order from the chaos of external and internal nature. Poetry, as the highest expression of knowledge, invokes for Chapman as for Sidney the lofty moral purpose of the poet as supreme orderer. Self-knowledge, which alone can bring harmony, further implies the Miltonic "self as true poem." Chapman's definition of learning also embraces the contemplative ideal of Neoplatonism and a spiritualized concept of love. The Elizabethan dramatist awards a further coronet to Boethius' mistress, philosophy. Such then is the ethical content of the tragedies, stoical only in the emphasis on the inner life, an idea which, as the author points out, is as congenial as well to the Christian and Socratic traditions.

Mr. Rees then studies learning as the key to Chapman's characterization. The reviewer recalls an analogous precept in La Primaudaye's *French Academie* (a storehouse of Renaissance ethics surprisingly omitted from Mr. Rees's bibliography): "The perfect dutie of man is, first to know his owne nature ... Ignorance of mans selfe and the want of knowledge wherefore and to what end he is borne, is the cause of error, of evil, of leaving the right way to follow the crooked." The tragic fault of Bussy and Byron is their failure to know themselves and thereby to order nature, without as well as within. Insatiate, confused, rebellious, Bussy is buffeted by nature's seeming necessity only because he cannot subdue his own passions. Byron not only lacks self-knowledge but also yields to flattery, the corresponding sin, and accepts treasonous complicity. Clermont, on the other hand, having achieved the internal order that obviates external law, proves himself strong enough to *be* the law unto himself that Byron boastfully but futilely professes to be. His involvement in revengeful intrigue disturbs but does not destroy his calm and knowing self-mastery. Similarly, both Cato and Chabot are truly virtuous heroes; for them as for Clermont, suicide represents spiritual victory over a world degenerate in its learning. Mr. Rees here distinguishes between the intemperate protagonists, who are merely cautionary in function, and the truly tragic heroes, who in their quiet dignity and moderation are exemplary. He elaborates an analogy with Homer; the cautionary protagonists resemble the passionate and perturbed Achilles, and the exemplary heroes, the constant and controlled Odysseus. The distinction corrects the conventional acceptance of the lawless Bussy as the apotheosis of Chapman's heroes, a view which distorts Chapman's ethical purpose and misinterprets his dramatic method.

On the whole the book maintains the unity of a thesis without narrowness. Though univocal, it is comprehensive. For example, a textual problem (the author offers a sound argument for earlier dating of *Caesar and Pompey*) is neither neglected nor relegated to a footnote but is integrated in the text. More-

over, the twenty-seven pages of notes, not mere documentation, themselves contribute to the history of ideas. Mr. Rees has dispelled the obscurity of earlier criticism and reclaimed Chapman for the diverse heritage of Christian humanism.

CHARLOTTE KESLER

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THE ROMANTIC REALIST: CAROLINE DE LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ. By Jean T. Wilde. New York: Bookman Associates, 1955. 477 p.

If the name Fouqué carries resonance today anywhere, it is because of the story entitled *Undine,* in which a truly romantic (i.e., fanciful) concept is dealt with in genuinely poetic fashion. Its charm, which was felt immediately on its publication in 1811, survived all the countercurrents of realism which the following decades flung around and against it. In my bibliography of translations, which Mrs. Wilde seems to have overlooked (I have two entries which she missed), Fouqué claims no less than 175 items up to 1935, of which 80 involve *Undine* directly. And not long ago the story was freshly filmed.

It is the second wife of this once popular writer, Karoline von Briest, who herself turned to writing and achieved some success, whom Mrs. Wilde undertakes to rescue from oblivion. It has obviously been a labor of love, extending over much more than a decade in time and involving a staggering amount of research, correspondence, and reading (the Preussische Staatsbibliothek sent Mrs. Wilde 46 volumes of Karoline's works, all of which she has apparently read). It is not surprising that she has come to see Caroline (Fouqué is Friedrich, the German kings are Frederick, but Karoline is Caroline) as perhaps no one else has ever seen her. She contends, indeed, that Caroline "emerges as an outstanding personality who, far from deserving the neglect which has been her lot, merits recognition as a figure of social and literary significance" (p. 436). It is this reviewer's judgment that Mrs. Wilde proves the opposite.

Quantitatively speaking, the book falls into two unequal and ostensibly disparate halves, one dealing with "Caroline and her circle," the other with "Caroline's contribution to literature." Qualitatively, one might record a considerable consistency in the two parts. What Mrs. Wilde does, in effect, is to let Caroline tell her own story. First, her life is followed through contemporaneous letters by and to her and others, plus memoirs and other printed sources bearing on her and her family and friends. Letters which are not quoted verbatim are frequently reported in some detail, so that the letter writer does the talking. In the second part, Caroline's principal novels and stories are renarrated at length, and light is thrown on the contemporary responses to her writing from reviews of them, which are presented rather fully. Each of the book's fourteen chapters is followed by copious bibliographical and explanatory notes.

While this procedure is open to criticism, in the present instance it can be defended on the ground that most of the material is hardly accessible in this country, and that some of Caroline's works may even have disappeared entirely in the bombings of World War II. At any rate, Mrs. Wilde supplies as she goes along the material on which the reader's judgment is to be based. Anyone who studies the second part of this book will not need (or perhaps wish) to read any of Caroline's major works in the original.

It must be said that, while Caroline the woman stands up well enough under this close scrutiny, Caroline the writer does not; and when to Mrs. Wilde's own candid criticisms the reader adds those which even a cursory perusal of the résumés

is almost certain to elicit, it is not only understandable that Caroline's works have been forgotten, but it is difficult to understand how they ever had any vogue at all. It would be fascinating, but it would take us too far afield here, to inquire why German romanticism was more pervasively fantastic than that of any other nation of Europe. Somehow, I think, it must have been connected with the political configuration of the (Napoleonic) time, which encouraged such a wholesale flight from reality as the Germans have never known before or since.

However that may be, it seems clear that Caroline, who was a vital and strongly sexed women (she bore one child out of wedlock during her first marriage, and knew other infatuations in later years), took up writing partly as a release for the abundant energy which found inadequate scope in her marriage with Fouqué (by whom she had no children). It may be significant that Fouqué suggested writing to her, helped her from the outset, and gave her every encouragement and even some employment. Mrs. Wilde presents no evidence that Caroline possessed exceptional poetic talent, but more than a little to indicate that she took advantage of a current fashion which was in the range of her abilities, and that she gave a certain clientele what it would pay to get.

If there is a good deal of detail in the first part which could have been omitted without loss, and a little too much of the "she must have felt" style of biography, it is interesting to meet such personalities as Brentano, Chamisso, Eichendorff, Fichte, Hoffmann, the W. v. Humboldts, Kleist, Oehlenschläger, Jean Paul, Pückler-Muskau, the Schlegels, the Stolbergs, Tieck, Varnhagen, and others of the literati around Berlin.

It is hard for me to understand why the publisher printed Caroline's fine picture on the jacket but omitted it from the book. I also deprecate the title, which implies that Caroline was a supreme example of the combination. In point of fact, it seems to me doubtful that she was ever truly a realist; she remains incurably romantic to the end of her days.

There is a classified bibliography, including a list of Caroline's writings which is probably as complete as it can be made, since some of her journalistic work was unsigned. There is also a comprehensive index.

In one sense, Mrs. Wilde's objective is attained; in this book Karoline von Fouqué lives again.

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WALT WHITMAN EN HISPANOAMÉRICA. Por Fernando Alegría. México: Colección Studium, 1954. 426 p.

Walt Whitman en Hispanomérica es uno de los pocos ejemplos en Hispanoamérica de lo que se puede hacer con tenacidad y exactitud y de cómo se puede llegar a la comprensión de lo fundamental de un momento histórico en una cultura a través de las repercusiones de una figura literaria extranjera. Pero el título del libro es demasiado modesto. Se trata realmente de un estudio del whitmanismo en la América Latina y en España. Aunque no tan completo el panorama español o brasileño como el hispanoamericano, gracias a que Fernando Alegría ha estudiado cuidadosamente no sólo la influencia de Whitman, sino también la fama de Whitman en el mundo español y portugués y asimismo las repercusiones sociales y políticas de sus ideas, y al hecho de que ha visto claramente la intrincada red de dependencias entre los críticos franceses, ingleses, españoles (aun los que escriben en catalán), brasileños e hispanoamericanos, nos encontramos al concluir el libro con que se ha edificado una arquitectura whitmanista del mundo moderno que casi nos convence de que hemos presenciado la creación de una mentalidad

nueva al menos en América. Las dudas nos asaltan cuando nos preguntamos si esta mentalidad a la moda yanqui, que no han aceptado jamás los yanquis, nos cuadra más a nosotros que a ellos.

Walt Whitman en Hispanoamérica como libro de investigación adolece de un defecto quizá imposible de evitarse en trabajos de literatura comparada. El método que sigue el autor le obliga a enfocar los mismos problemas repetidas veces desde puntos de vista distintos. Lo que se gana en claridad se pierde en concisión. Los tres primeros capítulos del libro presentan "La biografía de Whitman," un estudio sobre el arte de *Leaves of Grass* y un sumario de las "Ideas fundamentales de Whitman." De por sí, estos tres capítulos constituyen un estudio del escritor estadounidense tal como aparece en el caleidoscopio del pensamiento hispano. Los capítulos V y VI, "La influencia de Whitman en la poesía hispanoamericana" y "Los traductores de Whitman" en consecuencia tienen que repetir algunas de las ideas ya esbozadas en la primera parte del estudio. Entre estas dos mitades del libro, se encaja un capítulo, "La cuestión sexual," que sirve de eje. Queda, es claro, para el psicólogo la elucidación de los problemas sexuales de Walt Whitman; y la pregunta que se formula inmediatamente el lector es, ¿cuánto en la fama de Whitman se debe a los altibajos de su desordenado poetizar y cuánto a la curiosidad malsana del lector moderno? Quizá corresponda al hispanoamericano contestar esta pregunta, ya que el mito de Walt Whitman parece tener más vida en los países nuestros que en el mundo inglés.

La erudición del autor y su acertado juicio se revelan con mayor brillo en el estudio detallado de la influencia de Whitman en Pablo Neruda y en el análisis minucioso de las traducciones de *Leaves of Grass* al español. No parece haber sido consultado, aunque podría aclarar algunos puntos de detalle, el opúsculo *La enumeración caótica en la poesía moderna* de Leo Spitzer. En un trabajo de la magnitud de éste, el error de detalle o la errata de imprenta no se pueden evitar. Que se encuentran muy pocos en el libro nos asegura que los trabajos de investigación en el campo de la literatura hispanoamericana están alcanzando una madurez rápida. El mismo hecho de que sea posible abordar con éxito un tema tan complejo y vasto es indicio de lo que se ha hecho ya en cuanto a preparación del terreno. De aquí, y como fruto de *Walt Whitman en Hispanoamérica*, debemos pasar otra vez al trabajo monográfico y profundo que complete el análisis del pormenor. La valoración definitiva—el si hemos ganado o perdido al jugarnos el corazón al whitmanismo—queda por decidirse. Lo que debe aclararse sin demora, es que el whitmanismo es cosa del pasado, pasada, tema de investigación, no norma de pensamiento y porvenir.

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